THE

WORKS

OF THE

AUTHOR

OF THE

NIGHT-THOUGHTS.

IN FOUR VOLUMES.

REVISED AND CORRECTED BY HIMSELF.

VOL II.

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BRITISH
MUSEUM

BUSIRIS,

KING of EGYPT.

A

TRAGEDY.

ACTE[redacted]

THEATRE-ROYAL in DRURY-LANE,

1719.

O triſte planè acerbumque funus! O morte ipſâ mortis tempus indignius! Jam deſtinata erat egregio juveni, jam electus nuptiarum dies; quod gaudium, quo mœrore mutatum eſt? PLIN. Epiſt.

PROLOGUE,

By a FRIEND.

Spoken by Mr. BOOTH.

LONG have you ſeen the Greek *and* Roman *name,*
Aſſiſted by the muſe, renew their fame,
While yet unſung thoſe heroes ſleep, from whom
Greece *form'd her* Plato's, *and her* Cæſar's Rome.
Such, Egypt, *were thy ſons! divinely great*
In arts, and arms, in wiſdom, and in ſtate.
Her early monarchs gave ſuch glories birth,
Their ruins are the wonders of the earth.
Structures ſo vaſt by thoſe great kings deſign'd,
Are but faint ſketches of their boundleſs mind:
Yet ne'er has Albion's *Scene, tho' long renown'd,*
With the ſtern tyrants of the Nile *been crown'd.*
The tragic muſe in grandeur ſhou'd excel,
Her figure blazes, and her numbers ſwell.
The proudeſt monarch of the proudeſt age,
From Egypt *comes to tread the* Britiſh *ſtage:*
Old Homer's *heroes, moderns are to thoſe*
Whom this night's venerable ſcenes diſcloſe.
Here pomp and ſplendor ſerve but to prepare;
To touch the ſoul is our peculiar care;

PROLOGUE.

By juſt diſtreſs ſoft pity to impart,
And mend your nature, while we move your heart;
Nor wou'd theſe ſcenes in empty words abound,
Or overlay the ſentiment with ſound.
When paſſion rages, eloquence is mean;
Geſtures and looks beſt ſpeak the moving ſcene.
Ye ſhining Fair! when tender woes invite
To pleaſing anguiſh and ſevere delight,
By your affliction you compute your gain,
And riſe in pleaſure as you riſe in pain.
If then juſt objects of concern are ſhown,
And your hearts heave with ſorrows not your own,
Let not the gen'rous impulſe be withſtood,
Strive not with nature; bluſh not to be good:
Sighs only from a noble temper riſe,
And 'tis your virtue ſwells into your Eyes.

Dramatis

Dramatis Perſonæ.

MEN.

BUSIRIS, King of *Egypt*,		Mr. ELRINGTON.
MYRON, the Prince,		Mr. BOOTH.
NICANOR, Father of *Mandane*,		Mr. MILLS.
MEMNON,	Conſpirators,	Mr. WILKS.
RAMESES,		Mr. WALKER.
SYPHOCES,		Mr. THURMOND.
PHERON,		Mr. WILLIAMS.
AULETES, a Courtier,		Mr. W. MILLS.

WOMEN.

MYRIS, Queen of *Egypt*,	Mrs. THURMOND.
MANDANE	Mrs. OLDFIELD.

SCENE, a Temple at MEMPHIS, in *Old Egypt*.

BUSIRIS.

BUSIRIS.

ACT I. SCENE I.

Enter PHERON *and* SYPHOCES.

SYPHOCES.

IF glorious ſtructures, and immortal deeds,
Enlarge the thought, and ſet our ſouls on fire,
My tongue has been too cold in *Egypt*'s praiſe,
The queen of nations, and the boaſt of times,
Mother of ſcience, and the houſe of Gods!
Scarce can I open wide my lab'ring mind
To comprehend the vaſt idea, big
With arts and arms, ſo boundleſs in their fame.

PHERON.

Thrice happy land! did not her dreadful king,
Far fam'd *Buſiris*, whom the world reveres,
Lay all his ſhining wonders in diſgrace,
By cruelty and pride.

SYPHOCES.

By pride indeed;

He calls himſelf The *Proud*, and glories in it,
Nor would exchange for *Jupiter's Almighty*.
Have we not ſeen him ſhake his ſilver reins
O'er harneſs'd monarchs to his chariot yok'd?
In ſullen majeſty they ſtalk along,
With eyes of indignation and deſpair,
While he aloft diſplays his impious ſtate,
With half their rifled kingdoms o'er his brow,
Blazing to heav'n in diamonds, and gold.

PHERON.

Nor leſs the tyrant's cruelty than pride;
His horrid altars ſtream with human blood,
And piety is murder in his hands. [*A great ſhout.*

SYPHOCES.

There roſe the voice of twice two hundred thouſand,
And broke the clouds, and clear'd the face of day;
The king, who from his temple's airy height,
With heart dilated, that great work ſurveys,
Which ſhall proclaim what can be done by man,
Has ſtruck his purple ſtreamer, and deſcends.

PHERON.

Twice ten long years have ſeen that haughty pile,
Which nations with united toil advance,
Gain on the ſkies, and labour up to heaven.

SYPHOCES.

The king—or proſtrate fall, or diſappear. [*Exeunt.*

Enter BUSIRIS, *attended.*

BUSIRIS.

This antient city, *Memphis* the renown'd,
Almoſt coæval with the Sun himſelf,

And

And boaſting ſtrength ſcarce ſooner to decay,
How wanton ſits ſhe amid nature's ſmiles;
Nor from her higheſt turret has to view,
But golden landſcapes and luxuriant ſcenes;
A waſte of wealth, the ſtorehouſe of the world!
Here, fruitful vales, far ſtretching, fly the ſight;
There, ſails unnumber'd whiten all the ſtream;
While from the banks full twenty thouſand cities
Survey their pride, and ſee their gilded towers
Float on the waves, and break againſt the ſhore:
To crown the whole, this riſing pyramid
[*Shews the plan.*
Lengthens in air, and ends among the ſtars;
While every other object ſhrinks beneath
Its mighty ſhade, and leſſens to the view,
As kings compar'd with me.

Enter AULETES. *He falls proſtrate.*

AULETES.

O live for ever,
Buſiris, firſt of men!

BUSIRIS.

Auletes, riſe.

AULETES.

Embaſſadors from various climes arrive,
To view your wonders, and to greet your fame;
Each loaden with the gifts his country yields,
Of which the meaneſt riſe to gold and pearl:
The rich *Arabian* fills his ample vaſe
With ſacred incenſe *Ethiopia* ſends
A thouſand courſers fleeter than the wind;

And their black riders darken all the plain:
Camels and elephants from other realms,
Bending beneath the weight of luxury,
Bring the beſt ſeaſons of their various years,
And leave their monarchs poor.

BUSIRIS.

What from the *Perſian?*

AULETES.

He bends before your throne, and far outweighs
The reſt in tribute, and outſhines in ſtate.

BUSIRIS.

Away; he ſees me not; I know his purpoſe;
A ſpy upon my greatneſs, and no friend:
Take his Embaſſador, and ſhew him *Egypt*;
In *Memphis* ſhew him various nations met,
As in a ſea, yet not confin'd in ſpace,
But ſtreaming freely thro' the ſpacious ſtreets,
Which ſend forth millions at each brazen gate,
Whene'er the trumpet calls; high over-head
On the broad walls the chariots bound along,
And leave in air a thunder of my own:
Jove too has pour'd the *Nile* into my hand,
The prince of rivers, ocean's eldeſt ſon:
Rich of myſelf, I make the fruitful year,
Nor aſk precarious plenty from the ſky——
Throw all my glories open to his view,
Then tell him, in return for trifles offer'd,
I give him *this*; and when a *Perſian* arm
[*Gives him a bow.*
Can thus with vigour its reluctance bend,
And to the nerve its ſtubborn force ſubdue;

Then

Then let his maſter think of arms—but bring
More men than yet e'er pour'd into the field;
Mean time, thank heav'n, our tide of conqueſt drives
A different way, and leaves him ſtill a king:
This to the *Perſian.*——I receive the reſt,
And give the world an anſwer. [*Exit* Buſiris.

MANDANE, *attended by prieſts and her virgins, is ſeen ſacrificing at a diſtance.*

An hymn to ISIS *is ſung. The prieſts go out.*

MANDANE, *attended by her maids, advances.*

MANDANE.

My morning duty to the gods is over,
Yet ſtill this terror hangs upon my ſoul,
And ſaddens every thought——I ſtill behold
The dreadful image; ſtill the threat'ning ſword
Points at my breaſt, and glitters in mine eye.—
But 'twas a dream; no more. My virgins, leave me:
And thou, great Ruler of the world, be preſent!
O kindly ſhine on this important hour!
This hour determines all my future life,
And gives it up to miſery or joy. [*She advances.*
Theſe lonely walks, this deep and ſolemn gloom,
Where noon-day ſuns but glimmer to the view,
This houſe of tears, and manſion of the dead,
For ever hides him from the hated light,
And gives him leave to groan.

Back ſcene draws, and ſhews MEMNON *leaning on his father's tomb.*

Was ever ſcene

So

So mournful! If, my lord, the dead alone
Are all your care, life is no more a bleſſing.
How cou'd you ſhun me for this diſmal ſhade,
And ſeek from love a refuge in deſpair?

MEMNON.

Why haſt thou brought thoſe eyes to this ſad place,
Where darkneſs dwells, and grief would ſigh ſecure
In welcome horrors, and beloved night?
Thy beauties drive thy friendly ſhades before them,
And light up day e'en here. Retire, my love;
Each joyful moment I wou'd ſhare with thee,
My virtuous maid, but I wou'd mourn alone.

MANDANE.

What have you found in me ſo mean, to hope
That while you ſigh, my ſoul can be at peace?
Your ſorrows flow from your *Mandane*'s eyes.

MEMNON.

O my *Mandane!*

MANDANE.

Wherefore turn you from me?
Have I offended, or are you unkind?———
Ah me! a ſight as ſtrange, as pitiful!
From this big heart, o'ercharg'd with gen'rous ſorrow,
See the tide working upward to his eye,
And ſtealing from him in large ſilent drops,
Without his leave!—can thoſe tears flow in vain?

MEMNON.

Why will you double my diſtreſs, and make
My grief my crime, by diſcompoſing you?—
And yet I can't forbear! Alas, my father!
That name excuſes all; what is not due To

To that great name, which life or death can pay?

MANDANE.

Speak on, and eaſe your lab'ring breaſt: It ſwells
And ſinks again; and then it ſwells ſo high,
It looks as it wou'd break. I know 'tis big
With ſomething you wou'd utter. Oft in vain
I have preſum'd to aſk your mournful ſtory;
But ever have been anſwer'd with a frown.

MEMNON.

O my *Mandane!* did my tale concern
Myſelf alone, it wou'd not lie conceal'd;
But 'tis wrapt up in guilt, in royal guilt,
And therefore 'tis unſafe to touch upon it:
To tell my tale, is to blow off the aſhes
From ſleeping embers, which will riſe in flames
At the leaſt breath, and ſpread deſtruction round.
But thou art faithful, and my other ſelf;
And, O! my heart this moment is ſo full,
It burſts with its complaints; and I muſt ſpeak.
Myris, the preſent queen, was only ſiſter
Of great *Artaxes*, our late royal lord:
Buſiris, who now reigns, was firſt of males
In lineal blood, to which this crown deſcends.
Not with long circumſtance to load my ſtory,
Ambitious *Myris* fir'd his daring ſoul,
And turn'd his ſword againſt her brother's life:
Then mounting to the tyrant's bed and throne,
Enjoy'd her ſhame, and triumph'd in her guilt.

MANDANE.

So black a ſtory well might ſhun the day.

MEMNON.

Artaxes' friends (a virtuous multitude) Were

Were ſwept away by baniſhment or death,
In throngs, and ſated the devouring grave.
My father——Think, *Mandane*, on your own,
And pardon me!——— [*Weeps.*
The tyrant took me, then of tender years,
And rear'd me with his ſon (a ſon ſince dead).
He vainly hoped, by ſhews of guilty kindneſs,
To wear away the blackneſs of his crime,
And reconcile me to my father's fate;
Hence have I long been forc'd to ſtay my vengeance,
To ſmooth my brow with ſmiles, and curb my tongue,
While the big woe lies throbbing at my heart.—

Enter PHERON, *at a diſtance.*

PHERON. [*Aſide*]
So cloſe! ſo loving!—Here I ſtand unſeen,
And watch my rival's fate.

MEMNON.
But thou, my fair,
Thou art my peace in tumult, life in death;
Thou yet canſt make me bleſs'd.

MANDANE.
As how, my lord?

MEMNON.
Ah! why wilt thou inſult me?

MANDANE.
Memnon———

MEMNON.
Speak!

MANDANE.
Nature forbids; and when I would begin,
She

She ſtifles all my ſpirits, and I faint:
My heart is breaking, but I cannot ſpeak.
O let me fly.———

MEMNON.

You pierce me to the ſoul. [*Holding her.*

MANDANE.

O! ſpare me for a moment, till my heart
Regains its wonted force, and I will ſpeak———
Pheron, you know, is daily urgent with me,
Breaks thro' reſtraints, and will not be refus'd.
[Pheron *ſhews a great concern.*
Yet more: The prince, the young impetuous prince,
Before his father ſent him forth to war,
And gave the *Mede* to his deſtructive ſword,
Has often taught his tongue a ſilken tale,
Deſcended from himſelf, and talk'd of love.
Since laſt I ſaw thee, his licentious paſſion
Has haunted all my dreams———
This day the court ſhines forth in all its luſtre,
To welcome her returning warrior home;
Alas; the malice of our ſtars!

MEMNON.

To place it
Beyond the power of fate to part our loves;
Be this our bridal night, my life!—my ſoul! [*Embrace.*

PHERON.

Perdition ſeize them both! and have I lov'd
So long, to catch her in another's arms!
Another's arms for ever! O the pang!
Heart-piercing ſight!—but rage ſhall take its turn—
It ſhall be ſo—and let the crime be his

Who

Who drives me to the black extremity;
I fear no farther hell than that I feel. [*Exit.*

MEMNON.

Trembling I graſp thee, and my anxious heart
Is ſtill in doubt if I may call thee mine.
O bliſs too great! O painful ecſtaſy!
I know not what to utter.

MANDANE.

Ah, my lord!
What means this damp that comes athwart my joy,
Chaſtiſing thus the lightneſs of my heart?——
I have a father, and a father too,
Tender as nature ever fram'd. His will
Should be conſulted. Should I touch his peace,
I ſhould be wretched in my *Memnon*'s arms.

MEMNON.

Talk not of wretchedneſs.

MANDANE.

Alas! this day
Firſt gave me birth, and (which is ſtrange to tell)
The fates e'er ſince, as watching its return,
Have caught it as it flew, and mark'd it deep
With ſomething great; extremes of good or ill.

MEMNON.

Why ſhould we bode misfortune to our loves?
No; I receive thee from the gods, in lieu
Of all that happineſs they raviſh'd from me;
Fame, freedom, father, all return in thee.
Had not the gods *Mandane* to beſtow,
They never would have pour'd ſuch vengeance on me;
They meant me thee, and could not be ſevere.

Soon

Soon as night's favourable ſhades deſcend,
The holy prieſt ſhall join our hands for ever,
And life ſhall prove but one long bridal-day.
Till then, in ſcenes of pleaſure loſe thy grief,
Or ſtrike the lute, or ſmile among the flowers,
They'll ſweeter ſmell, and fairer bloom for thee.—
Alas! I'm torn from this dear tender ſide,
By weighty reaſons, and important calls;
Nay, e'en by love itſelf—I quit thee now,
But to deſerve thee more. [*They embrace.*

MANDANE.

Your friends are here. [*Exit* Mand.

MEMNON.

Excellent creature! how my ſoul pants for thee!
But other paſſions now begin their claim;
Doubt, and diſdain, and ſorrow, and revenge,
With mingling tumult, tear up all my breaſt:
O how unlike the ſoftneſſes of love!

Enter SYPHOCES.

SYPHOCES.

Hail, worthy *Memnon*.

MEMNON.

Welcome, my *Syphoces*.
And much I hope thou bring'ſt a bleeding heart;
A heart that bleeds for other's miſeries,
Bravely regardleſs of its own, tho' great;
That firſt of characters.

SYPHOCES.

And there's a ſecond,
Not far behind; To reſcue the diſtreſs'd,
Or die.

Who drives me to the black extremity;
I fear no farther hell than that I feel. [*Exit.*

MEMNON.

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That firſt of characters.

SYPHOCES.

And there's a ſecond,
Not far behind; To reſcue the diſtreſs'd,
Or die. MEM.

MEMNON.

Yes, die; and viſit thoſe brave men,
Who, from the firſt of time, have bath'd their hands
In tyrants' blood, and graſp'd their honeſt ſwords
As part of their own being, when the cauſe,
The public cauſe, demanded. O, my friend!
How long ſhall *Egypt* groan in chains? How long
Shall her ſons fall in heaps without a foe?
No war, plague, famine, nothing but *Buſiris*,
His people's father! and the ſtate's defence!
Yet but a remnant of the land ſurvives.

SYPHOCES.

What havock have I ſeen? Have we not known
A multitude become a morning's prey,
When troubled reſt, or a debauch, has ſour'd
The monſter's temper? Then 'tis inſtant death;
Then fall the brave and good, like ripen'd corn
Before the ſweeping ſcythe; not the poor mercy
To ſtarve, and pine at leiſure in their chains.——
But what freſh hope, that we receive your ſummons
To meet you here this morning?

MEMNON.

Know, *Syphoces*,
'Twas on this day my warlike father's blood,
So often laviſh'd in his country's cauſe,
And greatly ſold for conqueſt and renown;
'Twas on this execrable day, it flow'd
On his own pavement, in a peaceful hour,
Smok'd in the duſt, and waſh'd a ruffian's feet.
This guilty day returning, rouſes all
My ſmother'd rage, and blows it to a flame.

Where

Where are our friends?

SYPHOCES.

At hand. *Rameſes*,
Laſt night, when gentle reſt o'er nature ſpread
Her ſtill command, and care alone was waking,
Like a dumb, lonely, diſcontented, ghoſt,
Enter'd my chamber, and approach'd my bed:
With burſts of paſſion, and a peal of groans,
He recollects his god-like brother's fate,
The drunken banquet, and the midnight murder,
And urges vengeance on the guilty prince.
Such was the fellneſs of his boiling rage,
Methought the night grew darker as he frown'd.

MEMNON.

I know he bears the prince moſt deadly hate;
But this will enter deeper in his ſoul; [*Shews a letter.*
And rouze up paſſions, which till now have ſlept:
Murder will look like innocence to this.

SYPHOCES.

How, *Memnon?*

MEMNON.

This reminds me of thy fate;
The queen has courted thee with proffer'd realms,
And ſought by threats to bend thee to her will;
She languiſhes, ſhe burns, ſhe waſtes away
In fruitleſs hopes, and dies upon thy name.

SYPHOCES.

O fatal love! which, ſtung by jealouſy,
Expell'd a life far dearer than mine own,
By curſed poiſon——Ah divine *Apame!*
And cou'd the murd'reſs hope ſhe ſhou'd inherit

This

This heart, and fill thy place within theſe arms?—
But grief ſhall yield—Revenge, I'm wholly thine!

MEMNON.

The tyrant too is wanton in his age,
He ſhews that all his thoughts are not in blood;
Love claims its ſhare: he envies poor *Rameſes*
The ſoftneſs of his bed; and thinks *Amelia*
A miſtreſs worthy of a monarch's arms.

SYPHOCES.

But ſee, *Rameſes* comes; a ſullen gloom
Scowls on his brow, and marks him thro' the duſk.

Enter RAMESES, PHERON, *and other conſpirators.*

MEMNON.

To what, my friend, ſhall *Memnon* bid you welcome?
To tombs, and melancholy ſcenes of death?
I have no coſtly banquets, ſuch as ſpread
Prince *Myron*'s table, when your brother fell.
[*To* Rameſes.
I have no gilded roof, no gay apartment,
Such as the queen prepar'd for thee, *Syphoces*.
Yet be not diſcontent, my valiant friends,
Buſiris reigns, and 'tis not out of ſeaſon
To look on aught may mind us of our fate:
His ſword is ever drawn, and furious *Myris*
Thinks the day loſt that is not mark'd with blood.

RAMESES.

And have we felt a tyrant twenty years,
Felt him as the raw wound the burning ſteel?
And are we murmuring out our midnight curſes,
Drying our tears in corners, and complaining?

Our

Our hands are forfeited.—Gods! ſtrike them off.
No hands we need to faſten our own chains,
Our maſters will do that; and we want ſouls
To raiſe them to an uſe more worthy men.

MEMNON.

Ruffles your temper at offences paſt?
Here then, to ſting thee into madneſs.
[*Gives the letter.* Rameſes *reads.*

RAMESES.

Oh!

SYPHOCES.

See how the ſtruggling paſſions ſhake his frame!

RAMESES.

My boſom joy, that crowns my happy bed
With tender pledges of our mutual love,
Far dearer than my ſoul! and ſhall my wife,
The mother of my little innocents,
Be taken from us! Torn from me, from mine,
Who live but on her ſight! And ſhall I hear
Her cries for ſuccour, and not ruſh upon him?
My infant hanging at the neck upbraids me,
And ſtruggles with his little arms to ſave her.——
Theſe veins have ſtill ſome gen'rous blood in ſtore,
The dregs of thoſe rich ſtreams his wars have drain'd;
I'll giv't in dowry with her.

PHERON.

Well reſolv'd:
A tardy vengeance ſhares the tyrant's guilt.

RAMESES.

Let me embrace thee, *Pheron*, thou art brave,
And doſt diſdain the coldneſs of delay.

Curſe

Curſe on the man that calls *Rameſes* friend,
And keeps his temper at a tale like this;
When rage and rancour are the proper virtues,
And loſs of reaſon is the mark of men.

MEMNON.

Thus I've determin'd: When the midnight hour
Lulls this proud city, and her monarch dreams
Of humbled foes, or his new miſtreſs' love,
Then we will ruſh at once, let looſe the terrors
Of rage pent in, and ſtruggling twenty years
To find a vent, and at one dreadful blow
Begin and end the war.
A more auſpicious juncture could not happen.
The *Perſian*, who for years has join'd our counſels,
Stirr'd up the love of freedom, and in private
Long nurs'd that glorious appetite with gold,
This morn with tranſport ſnatch'd the wiſh'd occaſion
Of throwing his reſentment wide, and now
He frowns in arms, and gives th' event to fate.

RAMESES.

This hand ſhall drag the tyrant from the throne,
And ſtab the royal victim on this altar.
[*Pointing to the tomb.*

MEMNON.

O juſtly thought! Friends, caſt your eyes around;
All that moſt awful is, or great in nature,
This ſolemn ſcene preſents; the gods are here,
And here our fam'd forefathers ſacred tombs;
Who never brook'd a tyrant in this land.
Let us not act beneath the grand aſſembly!
The ſlighted altars tremble, and theſe tombs

Send

Send forth a peal of groans to urge us on.
Come then, ſurround my father's monument,
And call his ſhade to witneſs to your vows.

RAMESES.

Nor his alone. O all ye mighty dead!
Illuſtrious ſhades! who nightly ſtalk around
The tyrant's couch, and ſhake his guilty ſoul;
Whether already you converſe with Gods,
Or ſtray below in melancholy glooms,
From earth, from air, from heav'n, and even hell,
Come, I conjure you, by the pris'ner's chain,
The widow's ſighing, and the orphan's tears,
The virgin's ſhrieks, the hero's ſpouting veins,
By gods blaſphem'd, and free-born men enſlav'd.

MEMNON.

Hear, *Jove*, and you moſt injur'd heroes, hear,
While we o'er this thrice-hallow'd monument
Thus join our hands, and kneeling to the gods,
Faſt bind our ſouls to great revenge!

ALL.

We ſwear ———

MEMNON.

This night the tyrant and his minions bleed.

PHERON. [*Aſide.*]

So, now my foe is taken in the toil,
And I've a ſecond caſt for this proud maid———
It is an oath well ſpent, a perjury
Of good account in vengeance, and in love.

MEMNON.

We wrong the mighty dead, if we permit
Our eyes alone to count this grand aſſembly

A thouſand unſeen heroes walk among us;
My father riſes from his tomb; his wounds
Bleed all afreſh, and conſecrate the day:
He waves his arm, and chides our tardy vengeance:
More than this world ſhall thank us. O my friends!
Such our condition, we have nought to loſe;
And great may be our gain, if this be great,
To cruſh a Tyrant, and preſerve a State;
To ſtill the clamours of our father's blood,
To fix the baſis of the Public good,
To leave a fame eternal; then to ſoar,
Mix with the gods, and bid the world adore.

ACT II. SCENE I.

SCENE, *The Palace.*

A magnificent throne diſcover'd, and ſeveral courtiers walking to and fro.

Enter SYPHOCES *and* RAMESES. *Shouts at a diſtance.*

RAMESES.

WHAT means this duſt and tumult in the court,
Theſe ſtreamers fooling in the wind, theſe ſhouts,
The tyrant blazing in full inſolence,
And all his gaudy courtiers baſking round him,
Like pois'nous vermin in a dog-day ſun?

SYPHOCES.

Your father and prince *Myron* are arriv'd,

And

And with one peal of joy the nation rings.

RAMESES.

Long has my father ſerv'd this tyrant king,
With zeal well-worthy of a better cauſe.
Tho' with his helm he hides a hoary brow,
Long vers'd in death, the father of the field,
At the ſhrill trumpet he throws off the weight
Of fourſcore years, and ſprings upon the foe.
The tranſport danger gives him, conquers nature,
And a ſhort youth boils up within his veins.

SYPHOCES.

Behold this way they paſs to meet the king.

MYRON *and* NICANOR *paſs the ſtage with attendants.*

RAMESES. [*Looking on* Myron.]

What pity 'tis that one ſo loſt in guilt,
Should thus engage the ſight with manly charms,
And make vice lovely!

SYPHOCES.

Pardon me, *Rameſes*:
Tho' to my *foe*, I muſt be ever juſt.
He's gen'rous, grateful, affable, and brave:
But then he knows no limit to his paſſion;
The tempeſt-beaten bark is not ſo toſs'd
As is his reaſon, when thoſe winds ariſe:
And tho' he draws a fatal ſword in battle,
And kindles in the warm purſuit of fame,
Pleaſure ſubdues him quite; the ſparkling eye,
And gen'rous bowl, bear down his graver mind,
While fiery ſpirits dance along his veins,
And keep a conſtant revel in his heart.

RAMESES.

But here the tyrant comes!—With what exceſs
Of idle pride will he receive his ſon!
How with big words will he ſwell out this conqueſt,
And into grandeur puff his little tales!

Enter KING, *and aſcends the throne; on the other ſide,*
Enter MYRON *and* NICANOR.

KING.

Welcome, my ſon; great partner of my fame;
I thank thee for th' increaſe of my dominions,
That now more mountains riſe, more rivers flow,
And more ſtars ſhine in my ſtill growing empire.
The ſun himſelf ſurveys it not at once,
But travels for the view, whilſt far disjoin'd,
My ſubjects live unheard-of by each other;
Theſe wrapp'd in ſhades, while thoſe enjoy the light;
Their day is various, but their king the ſame.

MYRON.

Here, Sir, your thanks are due; to this old arm,
Whoſe nerves not threeſcore winter camps unbend,
You owe your victory, and I my life.
When my fierce courſer with a javelin ſtung,
Firſt rear'd in air, then tearing with a bound
The trembling earth, plung'd deep amidſt the foe;
And now a thouſand deaths from ev'ry ſide,
Had but one mark, and on my buckler rung;
Through the throng'd legions, like a tempeſt, ruſh'd
This friend, o'er gaſping heroes, rolling ſteeds,
And ſnatch'd me from my fate.

BUSIRIS.

I thank thee, general;

Thou

Thou haſt a heart that ſwells with loyalty,
And throws off the infection of theſe times;
But thy degenerate boy——

NICANOR.

No more my ſon;
I cut him off; my guilt, my puniſhment.
Look not, dread Sir, on me through his offence;
O let not that diſcolour all my ſervice,
And ruin thoſe who blame him for his crimes!

BUSIRIS.

Old man, I will not wear the crown in vain;
Subjects ſhall work my will, or feel my pow'r;
Their diſobedience ſhall not be *my* guilt.
Who is their welfare, glory, and defence?
The land that yields them food, and ev'ry ſtream
That ſlakes their thirſt, the air they breathe, is mine.
And is concurrence to their own enjoyment
By due ſubmiſſion, a too great return?
Death and deſtruction are within my call——
But thou ſhalt flouriſh in thy maſter's ſmile.
A faithful miniſter adorns my crown,
And throws a brighter glory round my brow.

NICANOR.

Take but one more, one ſmall one, to your favour,
And then my ſoul's at peace—I have a daughter,
An only daughter now an only child,
Since her loſt brother's folly; ſhe deſerves
The moſt a father can for ſo much goodneſs:
Her mother's dead, and we are left alone;
We two are the whole houſe; nor are we two,
In her I live, the comfort of my age;

And if the king extend his grace ſo far,
And take that tender bloſſom into ſhelter,
Then I have all my monarch can beſtow,
Or heav'n itſelf; but this, that I may wear
My life's poor remnant out in your command;
Stretch forth my being to the laſt in duty,
And when the fates ſhall ſummon, die for you.

BUSIRIS.

Nicanor, know, thy daughter is our care.

MYRON.

O, Sir, be greatly kind, exert your pow'r,
And with the monarch, furniſh out the friend!——
Art thou not he, that gallant-minded chief, [*To* Nic.
Who wou'd not ſtoop to give me leſs than life?
And ſhall I prove ungrateful? Shocking thought!
He that's ungrateful, has no guilt but one;
All other crimes may paſs for virtues in him.

NICANOR.

What joy my daughter's promis'd welfare gives me,
My lips I need not open to diſcover——
Thus humbly let me thank you.

BUSIRIS.

Dry thy tears,
And follow us; thy daughter's near our queen,
And longs, no doubt, to ſee thee: Bleſs the maid,
And then attend us on affairs of ſtate.——
I hear, there's treaſon near us: Though the ſlaves
Fall off from their obedience, and deny
That I'm their monarch, I'm *Buſiris* ſtill:
Collected in myſelf, I'll ſtand alone,
And hurl my thunder, tho' I ſhake my throne:

Like

Like death, a ſolitary king I'll reign
O'er ſilent ſubjects, and a deſart plain;
Ere brook their pride, I'll ſpread a gen'ral doom,
And ev'ry ſtep ſhall be from tomb to tomb. [*Exit.*

[Myr. *and* Aul. *who talk'd aſide, advance.*

MYRON.

Her abſent beauties glow'd upon my mind,
And ſparkled in each thought. She never left me—
Wou'dſt thou believe it? In the field of battle,
In the mid terror, and the flame of fight,
Mandane, thou haſt ſtol'n away my ſoul,
And left my fame in danger.—My rais'd arm
Has hung in air, forgetful to deſcend,
And, for a moment, ſpar'd the proſtrate foe——
O that her birth roſe equal to my own!
Then I might wed with honour, and enjoy
A lawful bliſs——And why not now? Methinks
Abſence has plac'd her in a fairer light,
Enrich'd the mind, and heighten'd ev'ry charm.

AULETES.

She comes!

MYRON.

That modeſt grace ſubdu'd my ſoul:
That chaſtity of look, which ſeems to hang
A veil of pureſt light o'er all her beauties,
And by forbidding, moſt inflames, deſire.

[*Enter* MANDANE.

What tender force! what dignity divine!
What virtue conſecrating ev'ry feature!
Around that neck, what droſs are gold and pearl!
Mandane! powerful being, whoſe firſt ſight

Gives me a tranſport not to be expreſs'd;
And with one moment over-pays a year
Of danger, toil, and death, and abſence from thee.

MANDANE.

My lord, I ſought my father.

MYRON.

Leave me not;
I've much to ſay; much more than you conceive;
Yes, by the gods, much more than I can utter:
My breath is ſnatch'd; I tremble; I expire. [*Aſide.*
Nay, here I'll offer tender violence—[*Takes her hand.*
May I not breathe my ſoul upon this hand?
When your eyes triumph, and inſult my pain,
Permit me here to take a ſmall revenge.

MANDANE.

My lord, I am not conſcious of my fault.

MYRON.

Tis falſe—I know the language of thoſe eyes;
They uſe me ill—See my heart beat, *Mandane*;
Believe not me, but tell yourſelf my paſſion——
Is it in art to counterfeit within?
To drive the ſpirits, and inflame the blood?
Each nerve is pierc'd with light'ning from your eye,
And every pulſe is in the throbs of love.

MANDANE.

My lord, my duty calls; I muſt not ſtay.

MYRON.

Give me a moment: I have that to ſpeak
Will burſt me, if ſuppreſt—O heavenly maid!
Thy charms are doubled,—ſo is thy diſdain—
Who is it; tell me, who enjoys thy ſmile?

There

There is a happy man, I ſwear there is;
I know it by your coldneſs to your friend—
That thought has fix'd a ſcorpion on my heart,
That ſtings to death—And is it poſſible
You ever ſpoke of *Myron* in his abſence,
Or caſt at leiſure a light thought that way?

MANDANE.

I thought of you, my lord, and of my father,
And pray'd for your ſucceſs; nor muſt I now
Neglect to give him joy.

MYRON.

Yet ſtay; you ſhall not go—Ungrateful woman!
I wou'd not wrong your father: but, by heav'n,
His love is hatred, if compar'd with mine.
I underſtand whence this unkindneſs flows;
Your heart reſents ſome licence of my youth,
When love had touch'd my brain. You may forgive me
Becauſe I never ſhall forgive myſelf;
But that you live, I'd ruſh upon my ſword.
If you forgive me, I ſhall now approach,
Not as a lover only, but a wretch
Redeem'd from baſeneſs to the ways of honour,
And to my paſſion join my gratitude:
Each time I kneel before you, I ſhall riſe
As well a better, as a happier, man,
Indebted to your virtue, and your love.

MANDANE.

I muſt not hear you.

MYRON.

O torment me not!
Hear me you muſt, and more—Your father's valour,

In the late battle, reſcu'd me from death:
And how ſhall I be grateful! Thou'rt a princeſs;—
Think not, *Mandane*, this a ſudden ſtart;
A flaſh of love, that kindles and expires:
Long have I weigh'd it; ſince I parted hence,
No night has paſs'd, but this has broke my reſt,
And mix'd with ev'ry dream. My fair, I wed thee
In the matureſt counſel of my ſoul.

MANDANE. [*Aſide.*]
O gods! I tremble at the riſing ſtorm;
Where can this end?

MYRON.
And do you then deſpiſe me?

MANDANE.
My lord, I want the courage to accept
What far tranſcends my merit, and for ever
Muſt ſilently upbraid my little worth.

MYRON.
Have I forſook myſelf, forgone my temper
Headlong to all the gay delights of youth,
And fall'n in love with virtue moſt ſevere;
Turn'd ſuperſtitious, to make thee my friend?
Gods! have I ſtruggled thro' the pow'rful reaſons
That ſtrongly combated my fond reſolves?
Was wealth o'erlook'd, and glory of no weight;
My parent's crown forgot, and my own conqueſts;
And all to be refus'd, to ſooth your pride,
And make my rival ſport?

MANDANE. [*Kneels.*]
With patience hear me——
Nor let my truſt in *Myron* prove my ruin.

MY-

MYRON.

Diſtraction! Art thou marry'd?

MANDANE.

Oh!

MYRON.

My heart foretold it.—Ah, my ſoul! *Auletes.* [*Swoons.*

AULETES.

Madam, 'tis prudent in you to withdraw—[*Exit* Mand.

MYRON.

I do not live—I cannot bear the light!
Where is *Mandane?* But I would not know.
She is not mine.—Yet, though not mine in love,
Revenge, my juſt revenge, may overtake her.
O how I hate her! Let me know her faults:
Did the proud maid inſult me in diſtreſs,
And ſmile to ſee me gaſping? Speak, *Auletes,*
Did ſhe not ſigh? Sure ſhe might pity me,
Though all her love is now another's right.

AULETES.

She ſigh'd, and wept; but I remov'd her from you.

MYRON.

It was well done—Yet I cou'd gaze for ever.
And *did* ſhe ſigh? And *did* ſhe drop a tear?
The tears ſhe ſhed for me are ſurely mine;
And ſhall another dry them on thoſe cheeks,
And make them an excuſe for greater fondneſs?
Shall I aſſiſt the villain in his joys?
No; I will tear her from him——
I'd grudge her beauties to the gods that gave them.

AULETES.

My lord, have temper.

MYRON.

And another's paſſion

Warm on that lip! another's burning arms
Strain'd round the lovely waiſt for which I die,
And ſhe conſenting, wooing, growing to him!
What golden ſcenes, when abſent, did I feign!
What lovely pictures did I draw in air!
What luxury of thought! And ſee my fate!
Shall then my ſlave enjoy her; and I languiſh
In my triumphal car, my foot on purple,
And o'er my head a canopy of gold,
Fate in my nod, and monarchs in my train!
What if I ſtab him? No—She will not wed
His murderer—I never form'd a wiſh,
But full fruition taught me to forget it.
And am I leſſen'd by my late ſucceſs?
And have I loſt my conqueſt? Fly, *Auletes*,
And tell her———

AULETES.

What, my lord?

MYRON.

No, bid her——

AULETES.

Speak!

MYRON.

I know not what—My heart is torn aſunder.

AULETES.

Retire, my lord, and recompoſe yourſelf:
The queen approaches—Ha! her boſom ſwells;
[*Exit* Myron.
Her pale lip trembles; a diſorder'd haſte
Is in her ſteps; her eyes ſhoot gloomy fires——
When *Myris* is in anger, happy they
She calls her friends.

Enter

Enter QUEEN.

QUEEN.

Auletes, where's the king?

AULETES.

At council, madam.

QUEEN.

Let him know I want him. [*Exit* Aul.

Baſe! to forget to whom he owes a crown!
Fool! to provoke *her* rage whoſe hand is red
In her own brother's blood!

Enter KING *and* PHERON.

KING.

Horrid conſpiracy!

PHERON.

This night was deſtin'd for the bloody deed.

KING.

Miſtaken villains! if they wiſh my death,
They ſhould in prudence lay their weapons by:
So jealous are the gods of *Egypt*'s glory,
I cannot die whilſt ſlaves are arm'd againſt me.
Haſte, *Pheron*, to the dungeon; plunge them down
Far from the hopes of day; there let them lie
Baniſh'd this world while yet alive, and groan
In darkneſs, and in horror—Let double chains
Conſume the fleſh of *Memnon*'s loaded limbs,
'Till death ſhall knock them off—A king's thy friend:
Nay, more; *Buſiris*.—Go; let that ſuffice——

[*Exit* Pher.

QUEEN.

My lord, your thought's engag'd.

KING.

KING.

Affairs of ſtate
Detain'd me from my queen.

QUEEN.

The world may wait:
I've a requeſt, my lord.

KING.

Oblige me with it.

QUEEN.

Will you comply?

KING.

My queen, my pow'r is yours.

QUEEN.

Your queen?

KING.

My queen.

QUEEN.

Indeed, it ſhould be ſo—
Then ſign theſe orders for *Amelia*'s death.——
He ſtarts, turns pale, he's ſinking into earth.——
Enough; be gone, and fling thee at her feet;
Doat on my ſlave, and ſue to her for mercy.
Go; pour forth all the folly of thy ſoul;
But bear in mind, thou giv'ſt not of thy own:
Thou giv'ſt that kindneſs, which I bought with blood
Nor ſhall I loſe unmov'd.

KING.

I wiſh, my queen,
This ſtill had ſlept a ſecret for thy ſake;
But ſince thy reſtleſs jealouſy of ſoul
Has been ſo ſtudious of its own diſquiet
Support it as you may—I own I've felt
Amelia's charms, and think them worth my love.

QUEEN.

QUEEN.

And dar'ſt thou bravely own it too? O inſult!
Forgetful man! 'tis I then owe a crown!
Thou hadſt ſtill grovell'd in the lower world,
And view'd a throne at diſtance, had not I
Told thee thou waſt a man, and (dreadful thought!)
Thro' my own brother cut thy way to empire:
But thou might'ſt well forget a crown beſtow'd;
That gift was ſmall: I liſten'd to thy ſighs,
And rais'd thee to my bed.

KING.

I thank you for it:
The gifts you made me were not caſt away:
I underſtand their worth: Huſband and King
Are names of no mean import; they riſe high
Into dominion, and are big with pow'r———
Whate'er I was, I now am king of *Egypt*,
And *Myris'* lord.

QUEEN.

I dream: Art thou *Buſiris?*
Buſiris, that has trembled at my feet?
And art thou now my love, with clouded brow
Diſpenſing fate, and looking down on *Myris?*
Doſt thou derive thy ſpirit from thy crimes?
'Cauſe thou haſt wrong'd me, therefore doſt thou [threaten,
And roll thine eye in anger? Rather bend,
And ſue for pardon!—O deteſtable!
Burn for a ſtranger's bed!———

KING.

And what was mine,
When *Myris* firſt vouchſaf'd to ſmile on me?

QUEEN.

QUEEN.

Diſtraction! death! upbraided for my love!——
Thou art not only criminal, but baſe:
Mine was a god-like guilt: Ambition in it;
Its foot in hell, its head above the clouds;
For know, I hated when I moſt careſs'd:
'Twas not *Buſiris*, but the crown, that charm'd me,
And ſent its ſparkling glories to my heart:
But thou canſt ſoil thy diadem with ſlaves.

KING.

Syphoces is a king then.

QUEEN.

Ha!

KING.

Let fair *Amelia* know the king attends her. [*Exit.*

QUEEN.

Go, tyrant, go, and, wiſely, by thy ſhame
Prepare thy way to ruin: I'll o'ertake thee,
Living or dead; if dead, my ghoſt ſhall riſe,
Shriek in thy ears, and ſtalk before thine eyes:
In death, I'll triumph o'er my rival's charms,
And chill thy blood, when claſp'd within her arms;
Alone to ſuffer is beneath the Great;
Tyrant, thy torment ſhall ſupport my State. [*Exit.*

ACT III. SCENE I.

SCENE, *The General's Houſe.*

Enter the KING.

KING.

HERE dwells my ſtubborn fair: I'll ſooth her pride,
And lay an humbled monarch at her feet:
But let her well conſider; if ſhe's ſlow
To welcome bliſs, and dead to glory's charms,
Then my reſentment riſes in proportion
To this high grace extended to my ſlave,
And turns the force of her own charms againſt her:
Monarchs may court, but cannot be deny'd.
[*Enter the* QUEEN *veiled.*
Amelia, dry thy tears, and lay aſide
That melancholy veil——Ha! *Myris!*

QUEEN.

Myris!
A name that ſhould like thunder ſtrike thine ear,
And make thee tremble in this guilty place:
But wherefore doſt thou think I meet thee here?
Not with mean ſighs, and deprecating tears,
To humble me before thee and increaſe
The number of thy ſlaves, in hope to break
Thy reſolution, and avert thy crime;
But to denounce, if thou ſhalt dare perſiſt,

The

The vengeance due to injur'd heav'n and me:
And by this warning double thy offence:
Think, think of vengeance, 'tis the only joy
Which thou haſt left me: I'm no more thy wife,
Nor queen; but know I am a woman ſtill.

Enter AULETES.

AULETES.

May all the gods watch o'er your life and empire,
And render omens vain! So fierce the ſtorm,
Old *Memphis* from her deep foundations ſhakes,
And ſuch unheard-of prodigies hang o'er us,
As make the boldeſt tremble: See the moon
Robb'd of her light, diſcolour'd, without form,
Appears a bloody ſign, hung out by *Jove*,
To ſpeak peace broken with the ſons of men;
The *Nile*, as frighted, ſhrinks within its banks;
And as this hour I paſs'd great *Iſis*' temple,
A ſudden flood of light'ning ruſh'd upon it,
And laid the ſhrine in aſhes.

KING.

O, mighty *Iſis!*
Why all theſe ſigns in nature? Why this tumult
To tell me I am guilty? If my crown
The fates demand, why, let them take it back:
My crown, indeed, I may reſign; but O!
Who can awake the dead?———
'Tis hence theſe ſpectres ſhock my midnight thoughts,
And nature's laws are broke to diſcompoſe me;
'Tis I that whirl theſe hurricanes in air,
And ſhake the earth's foundations with my guilt.
O *Myris!* give me back my innocence.

QUEEN.

QUEEN.

I bought it with an empire.

KING.

Cheaply ſold!
Why didſt thou urge my lifted arm to ſtrike
The pious king, when my own heart recoil'd?

QUEEN.

Why did you yield when urg'd, and by a woman;
You that are vain of your ſuperior reaſon,
And ſwell with the prerogative of man?
If you ſucceed, our counſel is of nought;
You own it, not accepted, tho' enjoy'd;
But ſteal the glory, and deny the favour:
Yet if a fatal conſequence attend,
Then we're the authors; then your treach'rous praiſe
Allows us ſenſe enough to be condemn'd.

KING.

'Tis prudent to diſſemble with her fury,
And wait a ſoſter ſeaſon for my love. [*Aſide.*
Bid *Iſis* prieſts attend their king's devotions;
I'll ſooth with ſacrifice the angry pow'rs;
Swift to my dungeons, bid their darkſome wombs
Give up the numerous captives of my wars;
Ten thouſand lives to heav'n devoutly pour;
Nor let the ſacred knife grow cool from blood,
Till ſevenfold *Nile*, infected with the ſtain,
In all his ſtreams flows purple to the main. [*Exit.*

QUEEN.

Thin artifice! I know the ſacrifice
You moſt intend—But I will daſh your joys;
Thou, victim, and thy goddeſs, both ſhall feel me.

Au-

AULETES.

Madam, the prince.

QUEEN.

And he is ſtill afflicted?

AULETES.

It grieves your faithful ſervant to relate it:
He ſtruggles manfully; but all in vain:
Sometimes he calls in muſic to his aid:
He ſtrives with martial ſtrains to fire his blood,
And rouze his ſoul to battle———
Then he relapſes into love again,
Feeds the diſeaſe, and doats upon his ruin.

QUEEN.

Why ſeeks he here the cauſe of all his ſorrow?

AULETES.

He ſeeks not here *Mandane*, but her father;
For friendſhip is the balm of all our cares,
Melts in the wound, and ſoftens every fate.

[*Martial muſic.*

Enter MYRON, *at a diſtance.*

QUEEN.

Heav'ns! what a glory blazes from his eye!
What force, what majeſty, in ev'ry motion,
As at each ſtep he trod upon a foe!

MYRON.

O that this ardour wou'd for ever laſt!
It ſhall; nor will I curſe my being more;
Chain'd kings, and conquer'd kingdoms, are before me;
I'll bend the bow, and launch the whiſtling ſpear,
Bound o'er the mountains, plunge into the ſtream,
Where thickeſt faulchions gleam, and helmets blaze.

I'll

I'll number my own heart among my foes,
And conquer it, or die. [*Exit.*

QUEEN.

The thoughts of war
Will ſoon diſlodge the fair one from his breaſt—
But this has broken in on my intent———
I' wou'd remind thee of my late commands.

AULETES.

Madam, 'tis needleſs to remain your ſlave—
At dead of night I ſet the pris'ners free.

QUEEN.

Yes, ſet the pris'ners free—'tis great revenge;
Such as my ſoul pants after—It becomes me.
O it will gall the tyrant! ſtab him home;
And if one ſpark of gratitude ſurvives,
Soften *Syphoces* to my fond deſire:
The tyrant's torment is my only joy;
Ye gods! or let me periſh, or deſtroy;
Or rather both; for what has life to boaſt
When vice is taſteleſs grown, and virtue loſt?
Glory and wealth I call upon in vain,
Nor wealth, nor glory, can appeaſe my pain;
My every joy upbraids me with my guilt,
And triumphs tell me ſacred blood is ſpilt. [*Exit* Qu.

Enter MYRON.

MYRON.

The ſhining images of war are fled,
The fainting trumpets languiſh in mine ear,
The banners furl'd, and all the ſprightly blaze
Of burniſh'd armour, like the ſetting ſun,
Inſenſibly is vaniſh'd from my thought:

No

No battle, ſiege, or ſtorm, ſuſtain my ſoul
In wonted grandeur, and fill out my breaſt:
But ſoftneſs ſteals upon me, melting down
My rugged heart in languiſhments and ſighs,
And pours it out at my *Mandane*'s feet——
I ſee her e'en this moment ſtand before me,
Too fair for fight, and fatal to behold:
I have her here; I claſp her in my arms;
And in the madneſs of exceſſive love,
Sigh out my heart, and bleed with tenderneſs.

AULETES.

My lord, too much you cheriſh this deluſion:
She is another's.

MYRON.

Do not tell me ſo:
Say rather ſhe is dead: Each heav'nly charm
Turn'd into horror! O the pain of pains
Is when the fair one, whom our ſoul is fond of,
Gives tranſport, and receives it from another!
How does my ſoul burn up with ſtrong deſire;
Now ſhrink into itſelf! Now blaze again!
I'll tear and rend the ſtrings that tye me to her:
If I ſtay longer here, I am undone.

As he is going, Enter NICANOR.

NICANOR.

My prince, and, ſince ſuch honours you vouchſafe,
My *friend!* I have preſum'd upon your favour;
This is my daughter's birth-day, and this night
I dedicate to joys, which ever languiſh,
If you refuſe to crown them with your preſence.

MYRON.

Nicanor, I was warm on other thoughts—— Ni-

NICANOR.

I am ſtill near you in the day of danger,
In toilſome marches, and the bloody field,
When nations againſt nations claſh in arms,
And half a people in one groan expire;
Why am I, with your helmet, thrown aſide,
Caſt off, and uſeleſs, in the hour of peace?

MYRON.

Since then you preſs it, I muſt be your gueſt——
Methinks I labour, as I onward move, [*Aſide.*
As under check of ſome controuling pow'r.
What can this mean? Wine may relieve my thoughts,
And mirth and converſe lift my ſoul again. [*Exeunt.*

The back Scene draws, and ſhews a Banquet.

Enter MANDANE, *richly dreſs'd.*

MANDANE.

It was this day that gave me life; this day
Shou'd give much more, ſhou'd give me *Memnon* too:
But I am rival'd by his chains; they claſp
The hero round (a cold, unkind, embrace!);
And but an earneſt of far worſe to come:
While he, my ſoul, in dungeon-darkneſs clos'd,
Breathes damp unwholeſome ſteams, and lives on poi-
I am compell'd to ſuffer ornaments, [ſon,
To wear the rainbow, and to blaze in gems;
To put on all the ſhining guilt of dreſs,
When 'tis almoſt a crime that I ſtill live:
Theſe eyes, which can't diſſemble, pouring forth
The dreadful truth, are honeſt to my heart:
Theſe robes, O *Memnon!* are *Mandane*'s chains,
And load, and gall, and wring, her bleeding heart.
[*Exit* Mandane.

Enter MYRON, NICANOR, AULETES, *&c. They take their places.*

NICANOR.

Sound louder, ſound, and waft my wiſh to heav'n,
Hear me, ye righteous gods, and grant my pray'r;
For ever ſhine propitious on my daughter:
Protect her, proſper her; and when I'm dead,
Still bleſs me in *Mandane*'s happineſs!——

[*The bowl goes round. Muſic.*

Haſte, call my daughter; none can taſte of joy
Till ſhe, the miſtreſs of the feaſt, is with us.

A ſervant brings NICANOR *a letter: He reads it.*

The king's commands at any hour are welcome.

MYRON.

Not leave us, general?

NICANOR.

Ha! the king here writes me,
The diſcontented populace, that held,
O'er midnight bowls, their deſperate cabals,
Are now in bold defiance to his power:
Amid the terrors of this ſtormy night,
Ev'n now they deluge all yon weſtern vale,
And form a war, impatient for the day:
The ſpreading poiſon too has caught his troops,
And the revolting ſoldiers ſtand in arms
Mix'd with ſeditious citizens.

MYRON.

Your call is great.

Enter MANDANE. MYRON *ſtarts from his ſeat in diſorder.*

MANDANE. [*Aſide.*]

O *Memnon!* how ſhall I become a banquet, Sup-

Suppreſs my ſorrow, and comply with joy?
Severeſt fate! Am I deny'd to grieve?

NICANOR.

Be comforted, my child: I'll ſoon return.
Why doſt thou make me bluſh? I feel my tears
Run trickling down my cheeks.

MYRON. [*Aſide to* Auletes.]

I muſt away:
Her ſmiles were dreadful, but her tears are death.
I can no more: I ſink beneath her charms,
And feel a deadly ſickneſs at my heart.

NICANOR.

Your cheek is pale: I dare not let you part:
You are not well———

MYRON.

A ſmall indiſpoſition:
I ſoon ſhall throw it from me—Farewell, general;
Conqueſt attend your arms.

NICANOR.

You ſhall not leave
Your ſervant's roof; 'tis an unwholeſome air,
And my apartment wants a gueſt.

MYRON.

Nicanor,
If health returns, I ſhall not preſs my couch,
And hear of diſtant conqueſts; but o'ertake thee;
And add new terror to the front of war.

NICANOR.

Mean time, you are a guardian to my child:
Let her not miſs a father in my abſence:
She's all my ſoul holds dear.

BOTH. [*Embracing.*]

Farewel. Farewel.

NI-

NICANOR *waits on* MYRON *off the ſtage, and returns.*

NICANOR.

My child, I feel a tenderneſs at heart
I never felt before; Come near, *Mandane*;
Let me gaze on thee, and indulge the father——
Thy dying mother with her clay-cold hand
Preſs'd mine; then, turning on thee her faint eye,
Let fall a tear of fondneſs, and expir'd————
I cannot love thee well enough; her grace
Softens thy cheek, and lives within thine eye.
Let me embrace you *both*—My heart o'erflows—
If I ſhould fall—Thy mother's monument—
But I ſhall kill thy tenderneſs—No more:
Nay, do not weep; I ſhall return again,
And with my deareſt child ſit down in peace,
And long enjoy her goodneſs.

MANDANE.

If the gods
Regard your daughter's fervent vows, you will.

NICANOR.

Farewel, my only care; my ſoul is with thee;
Regard *yourſelf*, and you remember *me*. [*Exit.*

Enter MYRON *and* AULETES.

MYRON.

No place can give me eaſe; my reſtleſs thought,
Like working billows in a troubled ſea,
Toſſes me to and fro; nor know I whither.
What am I, who, or where?—Ha! where indeed!
But let me pauſe, and aſk myſelf again,
If I am well awake——Impetuous bliſs! My

My heart leaps up; my mounting ſpirits blaze;
My ſoul is in a tempeſt of delight!

AULETES.

My lord, you tremble, and your eyes betray
Strange tumults in your breaſt.

MYRON.

What hour of night?

AULETES.

My lord, the night's far ſpent.

MYRON.

The gates are barr'd,
And all the houſhold is compos'd to reſt?

AULETES.

All: And the great *Nicanor*'s own apartment,
Proud to receive a royal gueſt, expects you.

MYRON.

Perdition on thy ſoul for naming him!
Nicanor! O I never ſhall ſleep more!
Defend me! Whither wander'd my bold thoughts!
Broke looſe from reaſon, how did they run mad!
And now they are come home all arm'd with ſtings,
And pierce my bleeding heart———
I beg the gods to diſappoint my crime;
Yet almoſt wiſh them deaf to my deſire:
I long, repent; repent, and long again;
And every moment differs from the laſt.
I muſt no longer parley with deſtruction:
Auletes, ſeize me; force me to my chamber;
There chain me down, and guard me from myſelf:
Hell riſes in each thought; 'tis time to fly. [*Exeunt.*

Enter MANDANE *and* RAMESES.

RAMESES.

I hope your fears have giv'n a falſe alarm.

MANDANE.

You've heard my frequent viſions of the night;
You know my father's abſence, *Myron*'s paſſion:
Juſt now I met him; at my ſight he ſtarted;
Then with ſuch ardent eyes he wander'd o'er me,
And gaz'd with ſuch malignity of love,
Sending his ſoul out to me, in a look
So fiercely kind, I trembled, and retired.

RAMESES.

No more; my friends (which, as I have inform'd you,
The queen to gall the tyrant has ſet free)
Are lodg'd within your call; th' appointed ſignal,
If danger threatens, brings them to your reſcue.

MANDANE.

Where are they?

RAMESES.

In the hall beneath your chamber:
Memnon alone is wanting; he's providing
For your eſcape before the morning dawn:
The reſt in vizors, fearing to be known,
Have ventur'd thro' the ſtreets for your protection.

MANDANE.

Auſpicious turn! then I again am happy.

RAMESES.

Auſpicious turn indeed! and what compleats
The happineſs, the baſe man that betray'd us
This arm laid low: I watch'd him from the king;
I took him warm, while he, with lifted brow,
Confeſs'd high thought, and triumph'd in his mien:
I thank'd him with my dagger in his heart.
'Tis late; refreſh yourſelf with ſleep, *Mandane*.

[*Exit* Mandane.

So,

So, 'tis reſolv'd, if *Myron* dares attempt
So black a crime, it juſtifies the blow:
He dies; and my poor brother's ghoſt ſhall ſmile.
This way he bends his ſteps: I hate his ſight;
And ſhall till death has made it lovely to me. [*Exit.*

Enter MYRON *and* AULETES.

MYRON.

O how this paſſion, like a whirlpool, drives me,
With giddy, rapid motion, round and round,
I know not where, and draws in all my ſoul!
I reaſon much; but reaſon about her,
And where ſhe is, all reaſon dies before her;
And arguments but tell me I am conquer'd.——
So black the night, as if no ſtar e'er ſhone
In all the wide expanſe; the light'ning's flaſh
But ſhews the darkneſs; and the burſting clouds
With peals of thunder ſeem to rock the land:
Not beaſts of prey dare now from ſhelter roam,
But howl in dens, and make the foreſt groan.
What then am I? A monſter, yet more fell,
Than haunts the wilds?—I am, and threaten more:
My breaſt is darker than this dreadful night,
And feels a fiercer tempeſt rage within.——
I muſt—I will—This leads me to her chamber—
Did not the raven croak? [*Starting.*

AULETES.

I hear her not.

MYRON.

By heav'n, methinks earth trembles under me.—
Awake, ye furies, you are wanting to me;
O finiſh me in ill; O take me whole;

Or gods confirm me good, without allay,
Nor leave me thus at variance with myſelf;
Let me not thus be daſh'd from ſide to ſide—
The old man wept at parting, kneel'd before me,
Confided in me, gave her to my care,
Nor long ſince ſav'd my life—And doubt I ſtill?
I'm guilty of the fact; here let me lie,
And rather groan for ever in the duſt,
And float the marble pavement with my tears,
Than riſe into a monſter. [*Flings himſelf down.*

MANDANE, *paſſing at a diſtance, ſpeaks to a ſervant.*

MANDANE.

Well, obſerve me.
Before the riſing ſun my lord arrives,
To ſeal our vows; the holy prieſt is with him:
Watch to receive them at the weſtern gate,
And privately conduct them to my chamber. [*Exit.*

MYRON. [*Starting up.*]

O torment! racks! and flames! then ſhe expects him
With open arms! Am I caſt out for ever;
For ever muſt deſpair, unleſs I ſnatch
The preſent moment? She is all prepar'd;
Her wiſhes waking, and her heart on fire!
That pow'rful thought ſweeps heav'n and hell before it,
And lays all open to the prince of *Egypt*;
Born to enjoy whatever he deſires,
And fling fear, anguiſh, and remorſe, behind him.
I ſee her midnight dreſs, her flowing hair,
Her ſlacken'd boſom, her relenting mien,
All the forbidding forms of day flung off
For yielding ſoftneſs—O I'm all confuſion!

I ſhiver

I ſhiver in each joint! Ah! ſhe was made
To juſtify the blackeſt crimes, and gild
Ruin and death with her deſtructive charms.

AULETES.

You'll force her then?

MYRON.

Thou villain but to think it.
No; I'll ſolicit her with all my pow'r;
Conqueſt and crowns ſhall ſparkle in her ſight:
If ſhe conſent, thy prince is bleſs'd indeed,
Takes wings, and tow'rs above mortality;
If ſhe reſiſt, I put an end to pain,
And lay my breathleſs body at her feet.

MANDANE, *paſſing at a diſtance to her chamber:* MYRON *meets her.*

MANDANE.

Is this well done, my lord?

MYRON.

Condemn me not:
Before you hear me: Let this poſture tell you,
I'm not ſo guilty as perhaps your fears;
Your commendable, modeſt fears, ſuſpect:
Nay, do not go; you know not what you do;
I wou'd receive a favour, not conſtrain it;
Return, or good *Nicanor*, beſt of fathers,
Shall charge you with the murder of his friend.

MANDANE.

And dare you then pronounce that ſacred name,
And yet perſiſt! Were you his mortal foe,
What could your malice more?

MYRON.

O, fair *Mandane!*

I know my fault; I know your virtue too;
But ſuch the violence of my diſorder,
That I dare tempt e'en you: Methinks that guilt
Has ſomething lovely which proclaims your pow'r——
But touch me with your hand, I die with bliſs.
Why ſwells your eye? By heav'n, I'd rather ſee
All nature mourn, than you let fall a tear.
I own I'm mad; but I am mad of love:
You can't condemn me more, than I myſelf;
In that we are agreed; Agree in all.
Condemn, but pity me; reſent, but yield;
For, O, I burn, I rave, I die, with love!

MANDANE.

O Sir!——

MYRON.

Nay, do not weep ſo; it will kill me:
This moment, while I ſpeak, my eyes are darken'd;
I cannot ſee thee; and my trembling limbs
Refuſe to bear their weight; all left of life
Is that I love: If love was in our pow'r,
The fault were mine; ſince not, you muſt comply.
How god-like to beſtow more heav'nly joys
Than you can think, and I ſupport, and live!

MANDANE.

O, how can you abuſe your ſacred reaſon,
That particle of heav'n, that ſoul of *Jove*,
To varniſh o'er, and paint, ſo black a crime!
O prince!——

MYRON.

What ſays *Mandane*?

MANDANE.

Sir, obſerve me:

My

My burſting ſighs, and ever-ſtreaming tears,
Your noble nature has with pity ſeen;
But would they not work deeper in your ſoul,
Were you convinc'd my ſorrows flow for you?
For you, my lord, they flow; for I am ſafe
(I know you are ſurpriz'd): They flow for you;
Myron, my *father's friend*, my *prince*, my *gueſt*—
Myron, my guardian god, attempts my peace,
And need I further reaſon for theſe tears?
Nature affords no object of concern
So great, as to behold a gen'rous mind,
Driv'n by a ſudden guſt, and daſh'd on guilt—
'Tis baſe; you ought not: 'Tis impracticable;
You cannot—Make neceſſity your choice;
Nor let one moment of defeated guilt,
Of fruitleſs baſeneſs, overthrow the glory
Your whole illuſtrious life has dearly bought,
In toilſome marches, and in fields of blood.

Enter AULETES, *and Servants.*

AULETES.

My lord, your life's beſet; the room beneath
Is throng'd with ruffians, which but wait the ſignal,
To ruſh and ſheath their daggers in your heart.

MYRON.

Betray'd! Curſt ſorcereſs; it was a plot,
Concerted by them all, to take my life,
And this the bait to tempt me to the toil.
She dies———

AULETES.

No; firſt enjoy, then murder her——
Truſt to my conduct, and you ſtill are ſafe.

They all are maſk'd: I have my vizor too;
But time is ſhort; for once confide in me.
You, Sir, for ſafety, fly to your apartment;
[*To the prince.*
You bear *Mandane* to her cloſet—You [*To ſervants.*
Speed to the Southern gate, and burſt it open.
[*As the ſervants ſeize* Mandane, *ſhe gives the ſignal. She is borne off.*

Enter RAMESES *and conſpirators, maſk'd.*

RAMESES.

The villain fled? Perdition intercept him!
Diſperſe; fly ſeveral ways; let each man bear
A ſteady point, well levell'd at his heart:
If he eſcapes us now, ſucceſs attend him;
May he for ever triumph!

As they paſs the ſtage in confuſion, AULETES *enters maſk'd among them.*

AULETES.

Ha! Why halt you!
Purſue, purſue; e'en now I ſaw the monſter,
The villain *Myron*, with theſe eyes I ſaw him,
Bearing his prize ſwift to the Weſtern gate:
There, there, it burſt. [*A noiſe without.*

ALL.

Away; purſue.

AULETES. [*Without.*]

'Tis done;
Advance the maſſy bar; and all is ſafe:
Stand here, and with your lives defend the paſs.

Enter MYRON.

MYRON.

I ſhall at leaſt have time for vengeance on her,
And

And then I care not if I die. Barbarians!
Their ſwords are pointed at my life! 'Tis well!
But I will give them an excuſe for murder;
Such, ſuch, a cauſe—Off, love, and ſoft compaſſion;
Harden each ſinew of my heart to ſteel:
I'll do, what done will ſhock myſelf, and thoſe
Whom time ſets fartheſt from this dreadful hour.

Enter MANDANE, *forc'd in by* AULETES.

MANDANE.

By all the pow'rs that can revenge a falſhood,
I'm innocent from any thoughts of blood.

MYRON.

Why then your champions here in arms? 'Tis falſe.

MANDANE.

Ah! let my life ſuffice you for the wrong
You charge upon me! O my royal maſter!
My ſafety from all ill! my great defender!
Or did my father but inſult my tears,
And give me to your care to ſuffer wrong;
Kill me, but not your friend, but not my father;
He loves us both, and my ſevere diſtreſs
Will ſcarce more deeply wound him than your guilt.

[Myron *walks paſſionately at a diſtance.*

MYRON.

Slaves, are you ſworn againſt me? Stop her voice,
And bear her to my chamber.

MANDANE.

O Sir! O *Myron!*
Behold my tears—Here I will fix for ever—
I'll claſp your feet—and grow into the earth—
O cut me, hew me—give to ev'ry limb

A ſeparate death—but ſpare my ſpotleſs virtue;—
But ſpare my fame—You wound to diſtant ages—
And thro' all time my memory will bleed.

MYRON. [*As ſervants force in* Mandane.]

Diſtraction! All the pains of hell are on me!

MANDANE. *(She is borne off.)*

O *Memnon!* O my lord!—my life! where art thou?

[Myron *expreſſes ſudden paſſion and ſurprize: Stands a while fixed in aſtoniſhment; then ſpeaks.*

MYRON.

As many accidents concur to work
My paſſions up to this unheard of crime,
As if the gods deſign'd it—be it then
Their fault, not mine—*Memnon!* Said ſhe not *Mem-*
My heart began to ſtagger; but 'tis over— [*non?*
Heav'n blaſt me, if I thought it poſſible
I could be ſtill more curſt—That hated dog,
Her lord, her life!—I thank her for my cure
Of all remorſe and pity; this has left me
Without a check, and thrown the looſen'd reins
On my wild paſſion to run headlong on,
And, in her ruin, quench a double fire;
The blended rage of vengeance and of love.
Deſtruction full of tranſport! Lo, I come,
Swift on the wing, to meet my certain doom:
I know the danger, and I know the ſhame;
But, like our Phœnix, in ſo rich a flame
I plunge triumphant my devoted head,
And doat on death in that luxurious bed.

ACT IV. SCENE I.

Enter MYRON *in the utmoſt diſorder, bare-headed, without light, &c. Walks diſturbedly before he ſpeaks.*

MYRON.

HEnceforth let no man truſt the firſt falſe ſtep
Of guilt; it hangs upon a precipice,
Whoſe ſteep deſcent in laſt perdition ends.
How far am I plung'd down beyond all thought
Which I this evening fram'd!——But be it ſo:
Conſummate horror! guilt beyond a name!
Dare not, my ſoul, repent; in thee repentance
Were ſecond guilt, and thou blaſphem'ſt juſt heav'n
By hoping mercy. Ah! my pain will ceaſe
When gods want pow'r to puniſh.—Ha! the dawn—
Riſe never more, O ſun! let night prevail:
Eternal darkneſs cloſe the world's wide ſcene,
And hide me from *Nicanor* and myſelf!
Who's there! [*Enter* Auletes.

AULETES.

My lord?

MYRON.

Auletes?

AULETES.

Guard your life.
The houſe is rouz'd; the ſervants all alarm'd;
The gilded tapers dart from room to room;

Solemn

Solemn confuſion, and a trembling haſte,
Mixt with pale horror, glares on ev'ry face;
The ſtrengthen'd foe has ruſh'd upon your guard,
And cut their paſſage thro' them to the gate;
Implacable *Rameſes* leads them on,
Breathing revenge, and panting for your blood.

MYRON.

Why, let them come; let in the raging torrent:
I wiſh the world would riſe in arms againſt me;
For I muſt die; and I would die in ſtate.

The doors are burſt open: Servants paſs the ſtage in tumult: RAMESES, *&c. purſue* MYRON's *guards over the ſtage; then* RAMESES *and* SYPHOCES *enter, meeting.*

RAMESES.

Where's the prince?

SYPHOCES.

The monſter ſtands at bay:
We can no more than ſhut him from eſcape,
Till further force arrive.

RAMESES.

O my *Syphoces!*

SYPHOCES.

This is a grief; but not for words.
Does ſhe ſtill live?

RAMESES.

She lives!—but O how bleſs'd
Are they which are no more! By ſtealth I ſaw her;
Caſt on the ground in mourning weeds ſhe lies;
Her torn and looſen'd treſſes ſhade her round;
Thro' which her face, all pale, as ſhe were dead,
Gleams like a ſickly moon; too great her grief
For words or tears! but ever and anon,

After

After a dreadful, ſtill, inſidious, calm,
Collecting all her breath, long, long, ſuppreſs'd,
She ſobs her ſoul out in a lengthen'd groan,
So ſad, it breaks the heart of all that hear,
And ſends her maids in agonies away.

SYPHOCES.

O tale, too mournful to be thought on!

RAMESES.

Hold——
No, let her virgins weep; forbear, *Syphoces*;
Tear out an eye, but damp not our revenge;
Diſpatch your letters; I'll go comfort her.
A ſervant ſpeaks aſide to Rameſes. *Exit* Syph.
And has ſhe then commanded none approach her?
I'm ſorry for it; but I cannot blame her.
Such is the dreadful ill, that it converts
All offer'd cure into a new diſeaſe;
It ſhuns our love, and comfort gives her pain.

Re-enter SYPHOCES.

SYPHOCES.

Your father is return'd; redundant *Nile*,
Broke from its channel, overſwells the paſs,
And ſends him back to wait the waters fall.

RAMESES.

And is he then return'd?—I tremble for him.——
I ſee his white head rolling in the duſt:
But haſte; it is our duty to receive him. [*Exit.*

Enter MYRON.

MYRON.

I feel a pain of which I am not worthy;
A pain, an anguiſh, which the honeſt man

Alone

Alone deſerves.—Is it not wondrous ſtrange,
That I, who ſtabb'd the very heart of nature,
Should have ſurviving ought of man about me?
And yet, I know not how, of gratitude
And friendſhip ſtill the ſtubborn ſparks ſurvive;
And poor *Nicanor*'s torments pierce my ſoul.
Confuſion! he's return'd— [*Starting.*

Enter NICANOR.

NICANOR. [*Advancing to embrace* MYRON.]
My prince—

MYRON. [*Turning aſide, and hiding his face.*]
My friend—

NICANOR.
I interrupt you, Sir—

MYRON. [*Smiting his breaſt.*]
I had thee there:
Before thou cam'ſt, my thoughts were bent upon thee.

NICANOR.
O Sir, you are too kind!

MYRON. [*Aſide.*]
Death! tortures! hell!

NICANOR.
What ſays my prince?

MYRON.
A ſudden pain,
To which I'm ſubject, ſtruck acroſs my heart:
'Tis paſt; I'm well again.

NICANOR.
Heav'n guard your health!

MYRON.
Doſt thou then wiſh it?

NICANOR.
Am I then diſtruſted?
Then,

Then, when I ſav'd your life, I did the leaſt
I e'er wou'd do to ſerve you.

MYRON.

Barbarous man!

NICANOR.

What have I done, my prince? which way offended?
Has not my life, my ſoul, been yours?

MYRON.

Oh!—Oh!—

NICANOR. [*Takes him by the hand.*]

By heav'n, I'm wrong'd; ſpeak, and I'll clear myſelf.

MYRON.

I'm poiſon and deſtruction; curſe thy gods;
I'll kill thee in compaſſion.—O my brain!
Away, away, away! [*Shoves him from him, going.*

NICANOR

Do, kill me, prince——
You ſhall not go; I do demand the cauſe,
Which has put forth thy hand againſt thy father!
For, thus provok'd, I'll do myſelf the juſtice,
To tell thee, youth, that I deſerve that name;
Nor have thy parents lov'd thee more than I.

MYRON.

I hear them; they are on me—Looſe thy hold,
Or I will plant my dagger in thy breaſt.

NICANOR.

Your dagger's needleſs! O ungrateful boy!

MYRON. [*Embrace.*]

Forgive me, Father! O my ſoul bleeds for thee!
[*As he is going out,* Auletes *meets him, and ſpeaks to him aſide.*]
What, no eſcape? on ev'ry ſide inclos'd?
Then I reſolve to periſh by his hand;

'Tis

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That I, who ſtabb'd the very heart of nature,
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'Tis

'Tis juſt I ſhou'd; and meaner death I ſcorn:
But how to work him to my fate, to ſting
His paſſion up ſo high, will be a taſk
To me ſevere; as difficult as ſtrange.
Support me, cruel heart; it muſt be done. [*Aſide.*

NICANOR.

Now, from my very ſoul, I cannot tell——
But 'tis enchantment all; for things ſo ſtrange
Have happen'd, I might well diſtruſt my ſenſe:
But, if mine eyes are true, I plainly read
A heart in anguiſh; and, I muſt confeſs,
Your grief is juſt—It was inhuman in you——
But tell the cauſe; unravel, from the bottom,
The myſtery that has embroil'd our loves
(For ſtill, my prince, I love, ſince you repent):
What accident depriv'd me of my friend,
And loſt you to yourſelf?

MYRON.

A traitor's ſight!

NICANOR.

Beneath my roof?

MYRON.

Beneath thy very helmet:
Thou art a traitor. Guard thyſelf. [*Draws.*

NICANOR.

Diſtraction!
Traitor!—For ſtanding by your father's throne;
And ſtemming the wild ſtream, that roars againſt it,
Of rebel ſubjects, and of foreign foes?
For training thee to glory and to war?
For taking thee from out thy mother's arms
A mortal child, and kindling in thy ſoul

The

The noble ardors of a future god?
Farewell; I dare not truſt my temper more.

MYRON.

Grey-headed, venerable, traitor!

Enter RAMESES.

RAMESES.

Ha!
Turn, turn, blaſphemer, and repreſs thy taunts;
All provocation's needleſs, but thy ſight.

[*He aſſaults the prince:* Nicanor *hinders him.*

NICANOR.

Forbear, my ſon.

RAMESES.

Forbear?

NICANOR.

If I am calm,
Your rage ſhould ceaſe.

RAMESES.

No; 'tis my own revenge;
Unleſs, Sir, you diſown me for your ſon.

NICANOR.

Thy ſword againſt thy prince?

RAMESES.

A villain!

NICANOR.

Hold!

RAMESES.

The worſt of villains!

NICANOR.

'Tis too much.

RAMESES.

O father!——

NICANOR.

What wouldſt thou?

RAMESES.

Sir, your daughter—

NICANOR.

Rightly thought;
She beſt can comfort me in all my ſorrow:
Call, call *Mandane:* To behold my child
Wou'd chear me in the agonies of death:
Call her, *Rameſes*—Am I diſobey'd?

RAMESES.

O Sir!——

NICANOR.

What mean thoſe tranſports of concern?

RAMESES.

Though I'm an outcaſt from your love, I weep
To open your black ſcene of miſery.

NICANOR.

Where will this end?—O my foreboding heart!

RAMESES.

Should he, to whom, as to a god, at parting,
You gave, with ſtreaming eyes, your ſoul's delight,
While yet your laſt embrace was warm about him,
Gloomy and dreadful as this ſtormy night,
Ruſh on your child, your comfort, your *Mandane*,
All ſweet and lovely as the bluſhing morn,
Seize her by force, now trembling, breathleſs, pale,
Proſtrate in anguiſh, tearing up the earth,
Imploring, ſhrieking, to the gods and you——
O hold my brain!—Look there, and think the reſt.

The back ſcene opens. A darken'd chamber, a bed, and the curtains drawn. Women paſs out, weeping, &c. Nicanor *falls back on* Rameſes.

NICANOR.

Is't poſſible!—my child! my only daughter!
The growth of my own life! that ſweeten'd age
And pain!—O nature bleeds within me!

MANDANE.

Weep not, my virgins; ceaſe your uſeleſs tears;
Kindneſs is thrown away upon deſpair,
And but provokes the ſorrow it wou'd eaſe.

NICANOR.

Aſſiſt me forwards.

MANDANE.

Moſt unwelcome news!
Is he return'd? The gods ſupport my father.
I now begin to wiſh he lov'd me leſs.

NICANOR.

There, there, ſhe pierc'd the very tend'reſt nerve:
She pities me, dear babe; ſhe pities me:
Through all the raging tortures of her ſoul,
She feels my pain! But hold, my heart, to thank her;
Then burſt at once, and let the pangs of death
Put *Myron* from my thought. [*Goes to her.*

MANDANE.

Severeſt fate
Has done its worſt—I've drawn my father's tears.—

NICANOR.

Forbear to call me by that tender name;
Since I can't help thee, I wou'd fain forget
Thou art a part of me—It only ſharpens
Thoſe pangs, which, if a ſtranger, I ſhould feel.—

O ſpare me, my *Mandane!* To behold thee
In ſuch exceſs of ſorrow, quite deſtroys me,
And I ſhall die, and leave thee, unreveng'd.

MANDANE.

O Sir! there are misfortunes moſt ſevere,
Which yet can bear the light, and, well ſuſtain'd,
Adorn the ſufferer.—But this affliction
Has made deſpair a virtue, and demands
Utter extinction, and eternal night,
As height of happineſs. [*Scene ſhuts on them.*

Enter SYPHOCES.

RAMESES.

O my *Syphoces.*

SYPHOCES.

And does this move you? does this melt you down,
And pour you out in ſorrow? Then fly far,
Ere *Memnon* comes; he comes with flushing cheek,
And beating heart, to bear a bride away,
And bleſs his fate: How dreadfully deceiv'd!

RAMESES.

The melancholy ſcene at length begins.

Enter MEMNON.

MEMNON.

O give me leave to yield to nature,
And indulge my joy——
My friend! my brother! O the ecſtaſy
That fires my veins, and dances at my heart!
You love me not, if you refuſe to join
In all the juſt extravagance and flight
Of boundleſs tranſport on this happy hour.
Where is my ſoul, my bliſs, my lovely bride!

Call,

Call, call her forth: O haſte; the prieſt expects us,
And ev'ry moment is a crime to love.

RAMESES. [*To* Syphoces.]

Speak to him:—Pr'ythee ſpeak.

SYPHOCES.

By heav'n, I cannot.

MEMNON.

What can this mean?

RAMESES.

Syphoces.

SYPHOCES.

Nay; *Rameſes.*

MEMNON.

By all the gods, they ſtruggle with their ſorrows,
And ſwallow down their tears to hide them from me:
By friendſhip's ſacred name, I charge you, ſpeak.

[*They look on him with the utmoſt concern, and go out on different ſides of the ſtage.*

Was ever man thus left to dreadful thought,
And all the horrors of a black ſurmiſe!
What woe is this too big to be expreſs'd?
O my ſad heart! Why bod'ſt thou ſo ſeverely?
Mandane's life's in danger! There, indeed;
Fortune, I fear thee ſtill; her beauties arm thee;
Her virtues make thee dreadful to my thought:
But for my love, how I could laugh at fate!

Enter a ſervant, and gives him a paper. He reads.

Enter RAMESES. MEMNON *ſwoons, and falls on* RAMESES.

RAMESES.

'Twere happy if his ſoul wou'd ne'er return:

The

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RAMESES.

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The

The gods may ſtill be merciful in this.——
His lids begin to riſe.—How fares my friend?

MEMNON.

Did *Myron* feel my pangs, you'd pity him.

Enter SYPHOCES.

SYPHOCES.

Fainting beneath th' oppreſſion of her grief,
This way *Mandane* ſeeks the freſher air:
Let us withdraw; 'twill pain her to be ſeen,
And moſt of all by you.

MEMNON.

By my own heart,
I judge, and am convinc'd.—I dare not ſee her:
The ſight wou'd ſtrike me dead.—

[*As* Memnon *is going*, Mandane *meets him: Both ſtart back: She ſhrieks.* Memnon *recovers himſelf, and falls at her knees, embracing them: She tries to diſengage: He not permitting, ſhe raiſes him: He takes her paſſionately in his arms: They continue ſpeechleſs and motionleſs for ſome time.*

RAMESES.

Was ever mournful interview like this?
See how they writhe with anguiſh! hear them groan!
See the large ſilent dew run trickling down,
As from the weeping marble; paſſion choaks
Their words, and they're the ſtatues of deſpair!

MEMNON.

O my *Mandane!*

[*At this ſhe violently breaks from him, and exit.*

But one moment more.

[*As* Memnon *is following*, Rameſes *holds him.*]

RAMESES.

Brother—

MEM.

MEMNON.

Forgive me.—

RAMESES.

You're to blame.—

MEMNON. [*Pointing after her.*]

Look there.

My heart is burſting.

RAMESES.

With revenge?

MEMNON.

And Love.

RAMESES.

Revenge!

MEMNON.

One dear embrace; 'twill edge my ſword.

SYPHOCES.

No, *Memnon*; if our ſwords now want an edge,
They'll want for ever; to this ſpot I charm thee,
By the dread words, Revenge and Liberty!
This is the criſis of our fates; this moment
The guardian gods of *Egypt* hover o'er us;
They watch to ſee us act like prudent men,
And out of ills extract our happineſs.
My friends, theſe dire calamities, like poiſon,
May have their wholeſome uſe: This ſad occaſion,
If manag'd artfully, revives our hopes;
It gives *Nicanor* to our ſinking faction
And ſtill the tyrant ſhakes.

RAMESES.

My father comes;
Or ſnatch this moment, or deſpair for ever:
While paſſions glow, the heart, like heated ſteel,
Takes each impreſſion, and is work'd at pleaſure.

Enter

Enter NICANOR.

NICANOR.

Why have the gods choſe out my weakeſt hours
To ſet their terrors in array againſt me?
This wou'd beat down the vigour of my youth,
Much more grey hairs, and life worn down ſo low.
Vain man! to be ſo fond of breathing long,
And ſpinning out a thread of miſery:
The longer life, the greater choice of evil;
The happieſt man is but a wretched thing,
That ſteals poor comfort from compariſon;
What then am I? Here will I ſit me down,
Brood o'er my cares, and *think* myſelf to death.
Draw near, *Rameſes*; I was raſh erewhile,
And chid thee without cauſe.—How many years
Have I been cas'd in ſteel?

RAMESES.

Full threeſcore years
Have chang'd the ſeaſons o'er your creſted brow,
And ſeen your fauchion dy'd in hoſtile blood.

NICANOR.

How many triumphs ſince the king has reign'd?

RAMESES.

They number juſt your battles, one for one.

NICANOR.

True; I have follow'd the rough trade of war
With ſome ſucceſs, and can, without a bluſh,
Review the ſhaken fort, and ſanguine plain.
I have thought pain a pleaſure, thirſt and toil
Bleſt objects of ambition. I remember
(Nor do my foes forget that bloody day)

When

When the barb'd arrow from my gaping thigh
Was wrench'd with labour, I diſdain'd to groan,
Becauſe I ſuffer'd for *Buſiris'* ſake.

RAMESES.

The king is not to blame.

NICANOR.

Is not the prince his ſon?

RAMESES.

But in himſelf———

NICANOR. [*Riſing in paſſion.*]

And has he loſt his guilt,
'Cauſe he has injur'd me? Erewhile thy blood
Was kindled at his name—Did'ſt Thou not tell me
A ſhameful black deſign on poor *Amelia?*
O *Memnon!* what a glorious race is this,
To make the gods a party in our cauſe,
And draw down bleſſings on us!

MEMNON.

He that ſupports them
In ſuch black crimes, is ſharer of their guilt.

NICANOR.

Point out the man, and, with theſe wither'd hands,
I'd fly upon his throat, tho' he were lodg'd
Within the circle of *Buſiris'* arms.

RAMESES.

He that prevents it not when in his power,
Supports them in their courſe of flaming guilt;
And you are He.

NICANOR.

Thou rav'ſt.

SYPHOCES.

The army's yours:
I've ſounded every chief; but wave your finger,

Thouſands fall off the tyrant's ſide, and leave him
Naked of help, and open to deſtruction:
But ſweep his minions, cut a padder's throat,
Or lop a ſycophant, the work is done.

NICANOR. [*Starting.*]

What wou'd you have me do?

MEMNON.

Let not your heart
Fly off from your own thought; be truly great;
Reſent your country's ſufferings as your own:
A generous ſoul is not confin'd at home,
But ſpreads itſelf abroad o'er all the public,
And *feels* for every member of the land.
What have we ſeen for twenty rolling years,
But one long tract of blood! or, what is worſe,
Throng'd dungeons pouring forth perpetual groans;
And free-born men oppreſs'd! Shall half mankind
Be doom'd to curſe the moment of their birth?
Shall all the mother's fondneſs be employ'd
To rear them up to bondage, give them ſtrength
To bear afflictions, and ſupport their chains?

SYPHOCES. [*Kneeling.*]

To you the valiant youth muſt humbly bend,
And beg that nature's gifts, the vigorous nerve,
And graceful port deſign'd to bleſs the world,
And take your great example in the field,
May not be forc'd by lewdneſs in high place,
To other toils, to labour for diſeaſe,
To wither in a loath'd embrace, and die
At an inglorious diſtance from the foe.

RAMESES. [*Kneeling.*]

To you *Amelia* lifts her hands for ſafety.

MEMNON. [*Burſting into tears.*]

To you—To you—

NICANOR.

By heav'n, he cannot ſpeak.—I underſtand thee:
Riſe—Riſe—my ſon: Riſe all; your work is done;
They periſh all; theſe creatures of my ſword.
Have I not ſeen whole armies vaulted o'er
With flying jav'lins, which ſhut out the day,
And fell in rattling ſtorms at my command,
To ſlay, and bury, proud *Buſiris'* foe?
He lives and reigns; for I have been his friend:
But I'll unmake him, and plough up the ground
Where his proud palace ſtands. [*Exit.*

MEMNON.

O my *Mandane!*
The gods by dreadful means beſtow ſucceſs,
And in their vengeance moſt ſeverely bleſs:
From thy bright ſtreaming eyes our triumphs flow,
The tyrant falls, *Mandane* ſtrikes the blow:
So the fair moon, when ſeas ſwell high, and pour
A waſteful deluge on the trembling ſhore,
Inſpires the tumult from her clouded throne,
Where ſilent, penſive, pale, ſhe ſits alone,
And all the diſtant ruin is her own.

ACT V. SCENE I.

SCENE, *The Field.*

Enter BUSIRIS *and* AULETES. *An alarm at a diſtance.*

BUSIRIS.

WElcome the voice of war! Tho' loud the ſound,
It faintly ſpeaks the language of my heart;
It whiſpers what I mean. But ſay, *Auletes*,
What urge theſe forlorn rebels in excuſe
For chooſing ruin?

AULETES.

Various their complaints:
But ſome are loud, that while your heavy hand
Preſſes whole millions with inceſſant toil
(Toils fitter far for beaſts than human creatures)
In building wonders for the world to gaze at,
Weeds are their food, their cup the muddy *Nile*.

BUSIRIS.

Do they not build for me? Let that reward them.
Yes, I will build more wonders to be gaz'd at,
And temper all my cement with their blood.
Whoſe pains and art reform'd the puzzled year,
Thus drawing down the ſun to human uſe,
And making him their ſervant? Who puſh'd off
With mountain dams the broad redundant *Nile*,
Deſcended from the moon, and bid it wander
A ſtranger ſtream in unaccuſtom'd ſhores?

Who

Who from the *Ganges* to the *Danube* reigns?
But virtues are forgot—Away—To arms!
I call to mind my glorious anceſtry,
Which, for ten thouſand rolling years renown'd,
Shines up into eternity itſelf,
And ends among the gods. [*An alarum.*

Enter MEMNON.

AULETES.

The rebel braves us.

BUSIRIS.

Hold; let our weapons thirſt one moment longer;
And death ſtand ſtill; 'tis he receives my nod.——
Whom meet I in the midſt of my own realm,
With bold defiance on his brow?

MEMNON.

The ſlave,
Whom dread *Buſiris* lately laid in chains;
An emblem of his country.

BUSIRIS.

Is it thus
You thank my royal bounty?

MEMNON.

Thus you thank'd the good *Artaxes*;
Thus you thank'd my father.

BUSIRIS.

What I have done, conclude moſt right and juſt;
For I have done it; and the gods alone
Shall aſk me why: Thou liv'ſt, altho' they fell;
And, if they fell unjuſtly, greater thanks
Are due from Thee, whom e'en injuſtice ſpar'd.

MEMNON.

Thy kindneſſes are wrongs; they mean to ſooth
My injur'd ſoul, and ſteal it from revenge.

BUSIRIS.

Turn back thine eye; behold thy troops are thin,
Thy men are rarely ſprinkled o'er the field,
And yet thou carrieſt millions on thy tongue.

MEMNON.

All thy blood-thirſty ſword has laid in duſt
Are on my ſide; they come in bloody ſwarms,
And throng my banners: Thy unequal'd crimes
Have made thee weak, and rob my victory.——

BUSIRIS.

Ha!

MEMNON.

Nay, ſtamp not, tyrant; I can ſtamp as loud,
And raiſe as many dæmons at the ſound.

BUSIRIS.

I wear a diadem,

MEMNON.

And I a ſword.

BUSIRIS.

Yet, yet ſubmit, I give thee life.

MEMNON.

Secure your own:
No more, *Buſiris*; bid the ſun farewell.

BUSIRIS.

Buſiris and the ſun ſhould ſet together:
If this day's angry gods ordain my fate,
Know thou, I fall like ſome vaſt pyramid;
I bury thouſands in my great deſtruction,
And thou the firſt.—Slave! in the front of battle;
There thou ſhalt find me.

MEMNON.

Thou ſhalt find me there,
And have well paid that gratitude I owe. [*Exeunt.*

A continual alarum.

Enter MYRON *and* NICANOR, *meeting.*

NICANOR.

Does not mine eye ſtrike horror thro' thy ſoul,
And ſhake the weapon from thy trembling arm?
Baſe boy! the foulneſs of thy guilt ſecures thee
From my reproach; I dare not name thy crime.

MYRON.

Old man, didſt thou ſtand up in thy own cauſe,
I then ſhould be afraid of fourſcore years,
And tremble at gray hairs; but ſince thy frenzy
Has lent thoſe venerable locks to caſt
A gloſs of virtue on the blackeſt crime,
Accurſt rebellion! this gives back my heart,
With all its rage, and I'm a man again.

NICANOR.

Come on, and uſe that force in arms I taught thee;
I'll now reſume the life I gave ſo late.

MYRON.

I grieve thou haſt but half a life to loſe,
And doſt defraud my vengeance—At my touch,
Thou moulder'ſt into duſt, and art forgotten:
[*Preparing to fight,* Myron *ſtops ſhort.*
Ah, no! I cannot fight with thee; begone,
And ſhake elſewhere; thou canſt not want a death
In ſuch a field, though I refuſe it to thee;
Rameſes, Memnon, give them to my ſword,
Suſtain'd by thouſands; but to fly from thee,
From thee, moſt injur'd man, ſhall be my praiſe,
And riſe above the conqueſt of my foes.

NICANOR.

'Tis *not* old age, th' avenging gods purſue thee!
[*He retires before* Nicanor *off the ſtage. A loud alarum.*

Enter BUSIRIS *and* AULETES, *in purſuit.*

BUSIRIS.

'Tis well; I like this madneſs of the field;
Let heighten'd horrors, and a waſte of death,
Inform the world, *Buſiris* is in arms:
But then I grudge the glory of my ſword
To ſlaves and rebels; while they die by me,
They cheat my vengeance, and ſurvive in fame.

AULETES.

I panted after in the paths of death,
And cou'd not but from far behold your plume
O'erſhadow ſlaughter'd heaps, while your bright helm
Struck a diſtinguiſh'd terror through the field,
The diſtant legions trembling as it blaz'd.

BUSIRIS.

Think not a crown alone lights up my name;
My hand is deep in fight. Forbid it, *Iſis!*
That whilſt *Buſiris* treads the ſanguine field,
The foremoſt ſpirit of his hoſt ſhou'd conquer
But by example, and beneath the ſhade,
Of this high brandiſh'd arm. Didſt thou e'er fear?
Sure 'tis an art; I know not how to fear;
'Tis one of the few things beyond my power;
And if death muſt be fear'd before 'tis felt,
Thy maſter is immortal, O *Auletes*———
But while I ſpeak, they live!
Where fall the ſounding cataracts of *Nile*,
The mountains tremble, and the waters boil;

Like

Like them, I'll ruſh; like them, my fury pour;
And give the future world one wonder more. [*Exeunt.*

Enter MYRON, *engaged with a party: His plume is ſmitten off: He drives the foe, and returns.*

MYRON.

When death's ſo near, but dares not venture on us,
'Tis heaven's regard, a kind of ſalutation,
Which to ourſelves our own importance ſhews:——
Faint as I am, and almoſt ſick of blood,
There is one cordial would revive me ſtill;
The ſight of *Memnon*; place that fiend before me.——
(*Exit.*

Enter MEMNON.

MEMNON.

Where, where's the prince? O give him to my ſword!
His tall white plume, which, like a high-wrought foam,
Floated on the tempeſtuous ſtream of fight,
Shew'd where he ſwept the field; I follow'd ſwift,
But my approach has turn'd him into air——
(*Enter* Myron.
The fight but now begins!

MYRON.

Why, who art thou?

MEMNON.

Prince, I am—

MYRON. (*Diſdainfully.*)

Memnon!

MEMNON.

No—I'm *Mandane.*

MYRON.

Ha!

MEMNON. [*Striking his own head and breaſt.*]
She's here, ſhe's here, ſhe's all: Her wrongs and virtues!
Virtues and wrongs! Thou worſe than murderer!

MYRON.
I charge thee name her not; forbear the croak
With that ill-omen'd note.

MEMNON.
Mandane!

MYRON.
Be it ſo.
When I reflect on her mean Love for thee,
And Plot againſt my life, my pain is leſs.

MEMNON.
'Tis falſe; ſhe meant, ſhe knew it not; *Rameſes*,
He, only he, was conſcious of the thought.

MYRON.
Then I'm a wretch indeed!

MEMNON.
As ſuch I'll uſe thee:
I'll cruſh thee like ſome poiſon on the earth;
Then haſte and cleanſe me in the blood of men.

MYRON.
I thank thee for this ſpirit which exalts thee
Into a foe, I need not bluſh to meet:
Now, from my ſoul, it joys me thou art found;
And found alive: By heav'n, ſo much I hate thee,
I fear'd that thou waſt dead, and hadſt eſcap'd me;
I'll drench my ſword in thy deteſted blood,
Or ſoon make thee immortal by my own.
Villain!

MEMNON.
Myron!

MY-

MYRON.

Rebel!

MEMNON.

Myron! [*They fight.*

MYRON.

Hell!

MEMNON.

Mandane!

MYRON. [*Falls.*]

Juſt the blow, and juſter ſtill,
Becauſe imbitter'd to me by that hand
I moſt deteſt; which gives my ſoul an earneſt
Of vaſt unfathomable woes to come;
That dreadful dowry for my dreadful love:
I leave the world my miſery's example;
If us'd aright, no trivial legacy. [*Dies.*

Enter SYPHOCES.

SYPHOCES.

My lord, I bring you moſt unwelcome news:
As poor *Mandane* wander'd near the field,
In hope to ſee her injuries reveng'd,
Thoughtleſs of any ſuff'rings but the paſt,
A party of the foe, ſaw, ſeiz'd, and bore her off.

MEMNON.

Vengeance and conqueſt now are trivial things;
Love made their prize. 'Tis impious in my ſoul
To entertain a thought but of her reſcue:
Now, now, I plunge into the thickeſt war,
As ſome bold diver, from a precipice
Into mid ocean, to regain a gem

Whoſe

Whoſe loſs impoveriſh'd kings; to bring it back,
Or ſee the day no more. [*Exeunt.*

Enter MANDANE, *priſoner.*

MANDANE.

A gen'rous foe will hear his captive ſpeak;
A benefit thus, kneeling, I implore:
Let one of all thoſe ſwords that glitter round me,
Vouchſafe to hide its point within my breaſt.

Enter MEMNON.

MEMNON.

Ah villains! curſed Atheiſts! Can you bear
That poſture from that form? What, what are num-
When I behold thoſe eyes! Not mine the glory, [bers
That ſingly thus I quell a hoſt of foes.
Inhuman robbers! O bring back my ſoul!
[*They force her off. He ruſhes in upon them, and is taken.*
Poor comfort to mankind, that they can loſe
Their lives but once—But, oh! a thouſand times
Be torn from what they love.

Enter RAMESES.

RAMESES.

Far have I waded in the bloody field,
Laborious through the ſtubborn ranks of war,
And trac'd thee in a labyrinth of death;
But thus to find thee!—Better find thee dead!
Theſe ſlaves will uſe thee ill.

MEMNON.

Of that no more:
Myron is dead, and by this arm.

RAMESES.

I thank thee:

All

All my few ſpirits left exult with joy;
I'll chaſe and ſcourge him through the lower world.

MEMNON.

Alas, thou bleed'ſt!

RAMESES.

Curſe on the tyrant's ſword;
I bleed to death: But cou'd not leave the world
Without a laſt embrace. Juſt now I met
The poor *Mandane*.

MEMNON.

Quickly ſpeak. What ſaid me?

RAMESES.

Nothing of comfort; ceaſe to aſk me farther:
If you meet more, your meeting will be ſad. ——
Your arm: I faint—Ah! what is human life?
How, like the dial's tardy-moving ſhade,
Day after day ſlides from us unperceiv'd!
The cunning fugitive is ſwift by ſtealth;
Too ſubtle is the movement to be ſeen;
Yet ſoon the hour is up—and we are gone.
Farewell: I pity thee. [*Dies.*

MEMNON.

Farewell, brave friend!
Wou'd I cou'd bear thee company to reſt;
But life in all its terrors ſtands before me,
And ſhuts the gate of peace againſt my wiſhes.—
Do I not hear a peal of diſtant thunder?
And ſee, a ſudden darkneſs ſhuts the day,
And quite blots out the ſun?—But what to me
The colour of the ſky? A death-cold dew
Hangs on my brow, and all my ſlacken'd joints
Are ſhook without a cauſe--A groan! From whence?--
Again!

Again! And no one near me? Vain deluſion!—
I fear not vain! I fear ſome ill is tow'rds me,
More dreadful ſure than all that's paſt.---*Mandane?*—
I hop'd ſhe was at peace, and paſt the reach
Of this ill news; but ſuch my wayward fate,
I cannot aſk a curſe, but 'tis deny'd me:
And cou'd I wiſh I ne'er could ſee her more?

Enter MANDANE, *guarded.*

MANDANE.

This is my brother: A ſhort privacy
Is a ſmall favour you may grant a foe.

GUARD.

Let it be ſhort; we may not wait your leiſure.

MEMNON.

'Tis wond'rous ſtrange; there's ſomething holds me from [her,
And keeps this foot faſt rooted to the ground.
This is the laſt time I ſhall ever pray. [*Kneeling.*
To me, ye gods, confine your threaten'd vengeance,
And I will bleſs your mercies while I ſuffer!

[Memnon *and* Mandane *advance ſlowly to the front of the ſtage.*

MANDANE.

What didſt thou pray for?

MEMNON.

For thy peace.

MANDANE.

'Twas kind:
But oh! thoſe hands in bonds deny the bleſſing,
For which they earneſtly were rais'd to heav'n———

MEMNON.

I fear ſo too: What we have yet to do
Muſt be ſoon done: This meeting is our laſt.
How ſhall we uſe it? MAN-

MANDANE.

How? Conſult thy chains,
And my calamities.

MEMNON.

Sad counſellors,
And cruel their advice—Are there no other?

MANDANE.

I look around———and find no glimpſe of hope;
A perfect night of horror and deſpair.

MEMNON.

Of horror and deſpair indeed, *Mandane:*
Canſt thou believe me? Nay, can I believe
Myſelf? The laſt thing that I wiſh'd for was—'Tis falſe!
The weight of my misfortune hurts my mind.

MANDANE.

Was what?

MEMNON.

I dare not think; to think is to look down
A precipice then thouſand fathom deep,
That turns my brain—Oh! Oh!

MANDANE.

Memnon, no more:
That ſilence, and thoſe tears, need no explaining;
And it is kind, with ſuch ſevere reluctance,
To think upon my death—though neceſſary.

MEMNON.

Ah hold! You plant a thouſand daggers here:
Talk not of dying—I diſown the thought:
Right is not right, and reaſon is not reaſon;
All is diſtraction, when I look on thee.
O all ye pitying gods! daſh out from nature
Your ſtars, your ſun, but let *Mandane* live.

MAN-

MANDANE.

No; death long ſince was my confirm'd reſolve.

MEMNON.

Myron is dead.

MANDANE.

What joy a heart like mine
Can feel, it feels———Had he been never born,
I might have liv'd—'tis now—impoſſible.

MEMNON.

This even to my miſeries I owe,
That it diſcovers greater virtues ſtill,
In her my ſoul adores———O my *Mandane!*
O glorious maid! then thou wilt be at peace———
[Memnon *walks thoughtfully; then returns.*
Muſt I ſurvive, and change thy tenderneſs
For a ſtern maſter, and perpetual chains?
Long I may groan on earth to ſate their malice,
Then through ſlow torments linger into death,
No ſteel to ſtab, no wall to daſh my brain!

MANDANE.

Ha!

MEMNON.

Why thus fix'd in thought? What mighty birth
Is lab'ring in your ſoul? Your eyes ſpeak wonders.—

MANDANE.

Will not the blood-hounds be content with life?

MEMNON.

Alas, *Mandane!* No; they ſtudy nature,
To find out all her ſecret ſeats of pain,
And carry killing to a dreadful art:
A ſimple death in *Egypt* is for friends.

MANDANE.

O then it muſt be ſo!—and yet it cannot!— MEM-

MEMNON.

What means this ſudden paleneſs?

MANDANE. [*Feeling in her boſom, ſhe ſwoons.*]

Heav'n aſſiſt me!

MEMNON.

My love! *Mandane!* hear me, my eſpous'd!
My deareſt heart! the infant of my boſom!
Whom I would foſter with my vital blood.

MANDANE. [*Shews a dagger.*]

'Tis well; and in return, I give thee—This.

MEMNON.

Millions of thanks, thou refuge in deſpair.

MANDANE.

Terrible kindneſs! Horrid mercy! Oh!
I cannot give it thee.

MEMNON.

Full well I know
Thy tender ſoul, and I muſt force it from thee.
[*As he is ſtruggling with her for the dagger, ſhe ſpeaks.*

MANDANE.

My lord! my ſoul! myſelf! you tear my heart:
Art thou not dearer to my eyes than light?
Doſt thou not circulate through all my veins;
Mingle with life, and form my very ſoul?

MEMNON.

Now, monſters, I defy you: Fate forbids
A long farewell: My guard may interpoſe,
And make your favour vain——Thus, only thus. [*Em-*
And now——— [*Going to ſtab himſelf.*] [*brace.*

MANDANE. [*Holds his arm.*]

Ah no! Since laſt I ſaw thee, thrice I rais'd
My trembling arm, and thrice I let it fall.—

If

If you refuſe compaſſion to my ſex,
Memnon betrays me, and is *Myron*'s friend.--—
As I a poniard, you ſupply an arm,
And I ſhall ſtill be happy in your love.

[*After a pauſe of aſtoniſhment, he ſinks gently on the earth.*

MEMNON.

From dreadful to more dreadful I am plung'd,
And find in deepeſt anguiſh deeper ſtill:
I can't complain in common with mankind---—
But am a wretched ſpecies all alone:
Muſt I not only loſe thee, but be curs'd
To ſprinkle my own hands with thy life-blood?

MANDANE.

It cannot be avoided.

MEMNON.

Nor perform'd.
Lift up my hand againſt thee as a foe!
I, who ſhould ſave thee from thy very father,
And teach thy deareſt friends to uſe thee well,
Make kindneſs kind, and ſoften all their ſmiles?
O, my *Mandane!* think how I have lov'd!
O, my *Mandane!* think upon thy pow'r!
How often haſt thou ſeen me pale with joy,
And trembling at a ſmile? And ſhall I———

MANDANE.

Myron!—

(*At that* Memnon *ſtarts up ſuddenly.*

MEMNON.

Ah hold! I charge thee hold! One glance that way
Awakes my hell, and blows up all its flames:—
The world turns round; my heart is ſick to death!
O my diſtraction! perfect loſs of thought!

MAN-

MANDANE.

Why ſtand you like a ſtatue? Are you dead?
What do you fold ſo faſt within your arms?
Why, with fix'd eye-balls, do you pierce the ground?
Why ſhift your place, as if you trod on fire?
Why gnaw your lip, and groan ſo dreadfully?
My lord, if I have ſpent whole live-long nights
In tears, and ſigh'd away the day in private,
Only oppreſs'd with an exceſs of love,
O turn, and ſpeak to me.

MEMNON.

And theſe, no doubt,
Are arguments that I ſhould draw thy blood.—
No child was ever lull'd upon the breaſt
With half that tenderneſs has melted from thee,
And fell like balm upon my wounded ſoul!
And ſhall I murder thee? Yes, thus—thus—thus.—
(Embracing ſome time.

MANDANE.

Alas! my lord forgets we are to die.

[Memnon *gazes with wonder on the dagger.*

MEMNON.

By heav'n, I had; my ſoul had took her flight
In bliſs—Why, is not this our bridal-day?

MANDANE.

That way diſtraction lies.

MEMNON.

Indeed it does.

BOTH.

Oh! Oh!

MANDANE.

Thy ſighs and groans are ſharper than thy ſteel.
The guard is on us. MEM-

MEMNON.

Then it muſt be done.
Sun, hide thy face, and put the world in mourning.
Though blood ſtart out for tears, 'tis done—But one,
One laſt embrace. *(As he embraces her, ſhe burſts into tears.*
Let me not ſee a tear—I cou'd as ſoon
Stab at the face of heav'n, as kill thee weeping.

MANDANE.

'Tis paſt; I am compos'd.

MEMNON.

And now—and now.

MANDANE.

Be not ſo fearful; 'tis the ſecond blow
Will pain my heart—indeed this will not hurt me.

MEMNON.

O thou haſt ſtung my ſoul quite through and through,
With thoſe kind words: I had juſt ſteel'd my breaſt,
(Daſhing down the dagger.
And thou undo'ſt it all——I could not bear
To raze thy ſkin to ſave the world from ruin.

MANDANE. *(Stabs herſelf.)*

If you're a woman, I'll be ſomething more.——
I ſhall not taſte of heav'n till you arrive. *(Dies.*

MEMNON.

Struck home—and in her heart—She's dead already;
And now with me all nature is expir'd————
My lovely bride, now we again are happy, *(Stabs him-*
And better worlds prepare our nuptial bow'r.— *[ſelf.*
Now every ſplendid object of ambition,
Which lately, with their various gloſſes, play'd
Upon my brain, and fool'd my idle heart,
Are taken from me by a little miſt,
And all the world is vaniſh'd. *(Dies.*

A march ſounded. Enter NICANOR *and* SYPHOCES, *victorious.*

The guards, which are advancing to the bodies, fly.

NICANOR.

The day's our own; the *Perſian*'s angry pow'rs
Have well repaid this morning inſolence,
And turn'd the deſperate fortune of the field,
By ſure, tho' late, relief.

SYPHOCES.

Nicanor, friend,
I from the city bring you welcome news:
My guilty letter from the amorous queen
I ſpread amongſt the multitude; while yet
Their blood was warm with reading the black ſcroll,
Myris, to view the fortune of the fight,
Leaving her palace for the Weſtern tow'r,
Was ſeiz'd, torn, ſcatter'd, on the guilty ſpot,
Where her great brother fell.

NICANOR.

The gods are juſt.

SYPHOCES.

See where *Buſiris* comes; your royal captive,
In his misfortune great; an awful ruin!
And dreadful to the conqueror!

NICANOR. [*Advancing, ſees the bodies.*]

Sad ſight!
A ſight that teaches triumph how to mourn,
And more than juſtifies theſe ſtreaming tears,
Even on the moment that my country's ſav'd
From ſore oppreſſion, and inglorious chains.

[*He falls on his attendants.*

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Even on the moment that my country's ſav'd
From ſore oppreſſion, and inglorious chains.

[*He falls on his attendants.*

A great ſhout. Enter BUSIRIS, *wounded.*

BUSIRIS.

Conquer'd? 'Tis falſe; I am your maſter ſtill;
Your maſter, though in bonds: You ſtand aghaſt
At your good fate, and, trembling, can't enjoy.
Now, from thy ſoul, I hug theſe welcome chains
Which ſhew you all *Buſiris*, and declare
Crowns and ſucceſs ſuperfluous to my fame.——
You think this ſtreaming blood will low'r my thought;
No, ye miſtaken men, I ſmile at death;
For living here, is living all alone;
To me a real ſolitude, amid
A throng of little beings groveling round me;
Which yet uſurp one common ſhape and name.
I thank theſe wounds, theſe raging pains, which promiſe
An interview with equals ſoon elſewhere.
[*He ſees* Memnon.
Ha! Dead? 'Tis well: He roſe not to my ſword;
I only wiſh'd his fate, and there he lies.
Some, when they die, die all; their mould'ring clay
Is but an emblem of their memories;
The ſpace quite cloſes up through which they paſs'd:
That I have liv'd, I leave a mark behind,
Shall pluck the ſhining age from vulgar time,
And give it whole to late poſterity:
My name is writ in mighty characters,
Triumphant columns, and eternal domes,
Whoſe ſplendor heighten our *Egyptian* day,
Whoſe ſtrength ſhall laugh at time, till their great baſis,
Old earth itſelf, ſhall fail: In after-ages,
Who war or build, ſhall build or war from me;

Grow

Grow great in each, as my example fires:
'Tis I of art the future wonders raiſe;
I fight the future battles of the world.——
Great *Jove*, I come! *Egypt*, thou art forſaken; [*Sinks.*
Aſia's impoveriſh'd by my ſinking glories;
And the world leſſens, when *Buſiris* falls. (*Dies.*

SYPHOCES.

Bear the dead monarch to his pyramid;
And for what uſe ſo-e'er it was deſign'd
By that high-minded, but miſtaken, man,
There let him lie magnificent in death;
Great was his life, great be his monument;
And on *Buſiris*' nephew, young *Arſaces*,
Of gentler ſpirit, let the crown devolve.
From this day's vengeance, let the nations know,
Jove lays the pride of haughtieſt monarchs low;
And they, who kindled with ambitious fire,
In arts and arms with moſt ſucceſs aſpire,
If void of virtue, but provoke their doom,
Graſp at their fate, and build themſelves a tomb.

EPI-

EPILOGUE.

By a FRIEND.

Spoken by Mrs. OLDFIELD.

THE race of critics, dull, judicious rogues,
To mournful plays deny briſk Epilogues:
Each gentle ſwain, and tender nymph, ſay they,
From a ſad tale ſhould go in tears away;
From hence quite home ſhould ſtreams of ſorrow ſhed,
And, drown'd in grief, ſteal ſupperleſs to bed.
This doctrine is ſo grave, the Sparks won't bear it;
They love to go in humour to their claret.
The Cit, who owns a little fun worth buying,
Holds half-a-crown too much to pay for crying:
Beſides who knows, without theſe healing arts,
But Love might turn your heads, and break your hearts;
And the poor Author, by imagin'd woes,
Might people Beth'lem *with our Belles and Beaux?*
Hence I, who lately bid adieu to pleaſure,
Robb'd of my ſpouſe, and my dear virgin treaſure;
I, whom you ſaw, deſpairing, breathe my laſt,
Am free and eaſy, as if nought had paſt;
Again put on my airs, and play my fan;
And fear no more that dreadful creature, Man.
—But whence does this malicious mirth begin?——
I know, ye beaſts, you reckon it no ſin.

'Tis

'Tis ſtrange that crimes the ſame, in diff'rent plays,
Should move our horror, and our laughter raiſe.
Love's Jove ſecure the comic Actor tries;
But, if he's wicked, in blank verſe he dies.
The farce, where wives prove frail, ſtill makes the beſt;
And the poor cuckold is a ſtanding jeſt:
But our brave bard, a virtuous ſon of Iſis,
Counts a bold ſtroke in Love among the vices;
In blood and wounds a guilty land he dips ye,
And waſtes an empire for one raviſh'd gypſy.
What muſty morals fill an Oxford *head,*
To notions of pedantic virtue bred!
There each ſtiff Don at gallantry exclaims,
And calls Fine men and Ladies filthy names;
They tell you Rakes and Jilts corrupt a nation;
—Such is the prejudice of education!
You, who know better things, will ſure approve
Theſe ſcenes, that ſhew the boundleſs power of Love.
Let, when they will, th' Italian *Things appear,*
This play, we truſt, ſhall throng an audience here.
Bold Myron's *paſſion, up to frenzy wrought,*
Would ill be warbled through an Eunuch's throat:
His part, at leaſt, his part requires a Man;
Let Nicolani *act it, if he can.*

THE
REVENGE.
A
TRAGEDY.

ACTED at the

THEATRE-ROYAL in DRURY-LANE,
1719.

By His MAJESTY's Servants.

Manet alta mente repoſtum. VIRG.

THE

REVENGE

A

TRAGEDY.

PROLOGUE,

By a FRIEND.

OFT has the buſkin'd muſe, with action mean,
Debas'd the glory of the Tragic ſcene;
While puny villains, dreſs'd in purple pride,
With crimes obſcene the heaven-born rage bely'd.
To her belongs to mourn the Hero's fate,
To trace the errors of the Wiſe and Great;
To mark th' exceſs of paſſions too refin'd,
And paint the tumults of a God-like mind;
Where, mix'd with rage, exalted thoughts combine,
And darkeſt deeds with beauteous colour ſhine.
Such lights and ſhades in a well-mingl'd draught,
By curious touch of artful pencils wrought
With ſoft deceit amuſe the doubtful eye,
Pleas'd with the conflict of the various dye.
Thus, thro' the following ſcenes, with ſweet ſurprize,
Virtue and guilt in dread confuſion riſe;
And Love and Hate, at once, and Grief and Joy,
Pity and Rage, their mingled force employ.
Here the ſoft Virgin ſees, with ſecret ſhame,
Her charms excell'd by friendſhip's purer flame;
Forc'd, with reluctant virtue, to approve
The generous Hero, who rejects her love.
Behold him there with gloomy paſſions ſtain'd,
A wife ſuſpected, and an injur'd friend;

Yet ſuch the toil where innocence is caught,
That raſh ſuſpicion ſeems without a fault.
We dread a while, leſt beauty ſhould ſucceed,
And almoſt wiſh ev'n virtue's ſelf may bleed.
Mark well the black Revenge, the cruel Guile,
The traitor-fiend trampling the lovely ſpoil,
Of Beauty, Truth, and Innocence oppreſs'd;
Then let the rage of furies fire your breaſt.
Yet may his mighty wrongs, his juſt diſdain,
His bleeding country, his lov'd father ſlain,
His martial pride, your admiration raiſe,
And crown him with involuntary praiſe.

Dramatis Perſonæ.

MEN.

Don ALONZO, the *Spaniſh* General,	Mr. BOOTH.
Don CARLOS, his Friend,	Mr. WILKS.
Don ALVAREZ, a Courtier,	Mr. THURMOND.
Don MANUEL, Attendant of Don CARLOS,	Mr. WILLIAMS.
ZANGA, a Captive *Moor*,	Mr. MILLS.

WOMEN.

LEONORA, ALVAREZ's Daughter,	Mrs. PORTER.
ISABELLA, the *Moor*'s Miſtreſs,	Mrs. HORTON.

SCENE, *SPAIN.*

THE

THE REVENGE.

ACT I. SCENE I.

Enter ZANGA.

ZANGA.

WHETHER firſt nature, or long want of peace,
Has wrought my mind to this, I cannot tell;
But horrors now are not diſpleaſing to me:
I like this rocking of the battlements.
Rage on, ye winds; burſt, clouds, and waters roar!
You bear a juſt reſemblance of my fortune,
And ſuit the gloomy habit of my ſoul.

[*Enter* Iſabella.

Who's there? My love!

ISABELLA.

Why have you left my bed?
Your abſence more affrights me than the ſtorm.

ZANGA.

The dead alone, in ſuch a night, can reſt;

And I indulge my meditation here.
Woman, away; I chooſe to be alone.

ISABELLA.

I know you do, and therefore will not leave you;
Excuſe me, *Zanga*, therefore dare not leave you.
Is this a night for walks of contemplation?
Something unuſual hangs upon your heart,
And I will know it; by our loves, I will.
To you I ſacrific'd my virgin fame:
Aſk I too much, to ſhare in your diſtreſs?

ZANGA.

In tears? Thou fool! Then hear me, and be plung'd
In hell's abyſs, if ever it eſcape thee.
To ſtrike thee with aſtoniſhment at once,
I hate *Alonzo*. Firſt recover that,
And then thou ſhalt hear farther.

ISABELLA.

Hate *Alonzo!*
I own, I thought *Alonzo* moſt your friend;
And that he loſt the maſter in that name.

ZANGA.

Hear then: 'Tis twice three years ſince that great man
(Great let me call him; for he conquer'd me)
Made me the captive of his arm in fight:
He ſlew my father, and threw chains o'er me,
While I, with pious rage, purſu'd revenge:
I then was young; he plac'd me near his perſon,
And thought me not diſhonour'd by his ſervice.
One day (May that returning day be night,
The ſtain, the curſe of each ſucceeding year!)
For ſomething, or for nothing, in his pride

He

He ſtruck me; (While I tell it, do I live?)
He ſmote me on the cheek—I did not ſtab him;
For that were poor revenge—E'er ſince, his folly
Has ſtrove to bury it beneath a heap
Of kindneſſes, and thinks it is forgot.
Inſolent thought! and like a ſecond blow!
Affronts are innocent, where men are worthleſs;
And ſuch alone can wiſely drop revenge.

ISABELLA.

But with more temper, *Zanga*, tell your ſtory:
To ſee your ſtrong emotions ſtartles me.

ZANGA.

Yes, woman, with a temper that befits it.
Has the dark adder venom? So have I,
When trod upon. Proud *Spaniard*, thou ſhalt feel me!
For from that day, that day of my diſhonour,
I from that day have curs'd the riſing ſun,
Which never fail'd to tell me of my ſhame:
I from that day have bleſt the coming night,
Which promis'd to conceal it; but in vain;
The blow return'd for ever in my dream:
Yet on I toil'd, and groan'd for an occaſion
Of ample vengeance: none is yet arriv'd.
Howe'er, at preſent I conceive warm hopes
Of what may wound him ſore, in his ambition;
Life of his life, and dearer than his ſoul.
By nightly march he purpos'd to ſurprize
The *Mooriſh* camp; but I have taken care
They ſhall be ready to receive his favour.
Failing in this, a caſt of utmoſt moment,
Would darken all the conqueſts he has won.

ISA-

ISABELLA.

Juſt as I enter'd an expreſs arriv'd.

ZANGA.

To whom?

ISABELLA.

His friend, Don *Carlos.*

ZANGA.

Be propitious,
O *Mahomet*, on this important hour,
And give at length my famiſh'd ſoul revenge!
What is revenge, but courage to call in
Our honour's debts, and wiſdom to convert
Others' ſelf-love into our own protection?
But ſee, the morning ray breaks in upon us;
I'll ſeek Don *Carlos*, and enquire my fate. [*Exeunt.*

Enter MANUEL *and Don* CARLOS.

MANUEL.

My lord Don *Carlos*, what brings your expreſs?

CARLOS.

Alonzo's glory, and the *Moors* defeat.
The field is ſtrow'd with twice ten thouſand ſlain,
Tho' he ſuſpects his meaſures were betray'd.
He'll ſoon arrive. O how I long t'embrace
The firſt of heroes, and the beſt of friends!
I lov'd fair *Leonora* long before
The chance of battle gave me to the *Moors*,
From whom ſo late *Alonzo* ſet me free;
And while I groan'd in bondage, I deputed
This great *Alonzo*, whom her father honours,
To be my gentle advocate in love,
To ſtir her heart, and fan its fires, for me.

MANUEL.

And what ſucceſs?

CAR-

CARLOS.

Alas, the cruel maid——
Indeed, her father, who tho' high at court,
And powerful with the king, has wealth at heart,
To heal his devaſtations from the *Moors*,
Knowing I'm richly freighted from the Eaſt,
My fleet now ſailing in the ſight of *Spain*,
(Heav'n guard it ſafe thro' ſuch a dreadful ſtorm!)
Careſſes me, and urges her to wed.

MANUEL.

Her aged father, ſee! leads her this way.

CARLOS.

She looks like radiant truth,
Brought forward by the hand of hoary time——
You to the port with ſpeed; 'tis poſſible
Some veſſel is arriv'd: Heav'n grant it bring
Tidings, which *Carlos* may receive with joy!

Enter ALVAREZ *and* LEONORA.

ALVAREZ.

Don *Carlos*, I am labouring in your favour
With all a parent's ſoft authority,
And earneſt counſel.

CARLOS.

Angels ſecond you!
For all my bliſs or miſery hangs on it.

ALVAREZ.

Daughter, the happineſs of life depends
On our diſcretion, and a prudent choice;
Look into thoſe they call unfortunate,
And cloſer view'd, you'll find they are unwiſe:
Some flaw in their own conduct lies beneath,

And

And 'tis the trick of fools to ſave their credit,
Which brought another language into uſe.
Don *Carlos* is of antient, noble blood;
And then his wealth might mend a prince's fortune:
For him the ſun is labouring in the mines,
A faithful ſlave, and turning earth to gold:
His keels are freighted with that ſacred pow'r,
By which ev'n kings and emperors are made.
Sir, you have my good wiſhes; and I hope (*To* Carlos.
My daughter is not indiſpoſed to hear you. [*Exit* Alv.

CARLOS.

O *Leonora!* why art thou in tears?
Becauſe I am leſs wretched than I was?
Before your father gave me leave to woo you,
Huſh'd was your boſom, and your eye ſerene.
Will you for ever help me to new pains,
And keep reſerves of torment in your hand,
To let them looſe on every dawn of joy?

LEONORA.

Think you my father too indulgent to me,
That he claims no dominion o'er my tears?
A daughter ſure may be right dutiful,
Whoſe tears alone are free from a reſtraint.—

CARLOS.

Ah my torn heart!

LEONORA.

Regard not me, my lord;
I ſhall obey my father.

CARLOS.

Diſobey him,
Rather than come thus coldly; than come thus
With abſent eyes, and alienated mien,

Suff'ring

Suffring addreſs, the victim of my love.
O let me be undone the common way,
And have the common comfort to be pity'd,
And not be ruin'd in the maſk of bliſs,
And ſo be envy'd, and be wretched too!
Love calls for love. Not all the pride of beauty;
Thoſe eyes, that tell us what the ſun is made of;
Thoſe lips, whoſe touch is to be bought with life;
Thoſe hills of driven ſnow, which ſeen are felt:
All theſe poſſeſt, are nought, but as they are
The proof, the ſubſtance of an inward paſſion,
And the rich plunder of a taken heart.

LEONORA.

Alas! my lord, we are too delicate;
And when we graſp the happineſs we wiſh'd,
We call on wit to argue it away:
A plainer man would not feel half your pains;
But ſome have too much wiſdom to be happy.

CARLOS.

Had I known this before, it had been well:
I had not then ſolicited your father
To add to my diſtreſs; as you behave,
Your father's kindneſs ſtabs me to the heart.
Give me your hand—Nay, give it, *Leonora:*
You give it not;—nay, yet you give it not—
I raviſh it.———

LEONORA.

I pray, my lord, no more.

CARLOS.

Ah! why ſo ſad? You know each ſigh does ſhake me;
Sighs there, are tempeſts here.———
I've heard, bad men would be unbleſt in heav'n:

What

What is my guilt, that makes me ſo with you?
Have I not languiſh'd proſtrate at thy feet?
Have I not liv'd whole days upon thy ſight?
Have I not ſeen thee where thou haſt not been?
And, mad with the idea, claſp'd the wind,
And doated upon nothing?

LEONORA.

Court me not,
Good *Carlos*, by recounting of my faults,
And telling how ungrateful I have been:
Alas! my lord, if talking would prevail,
I could ſuggeſt much better arguments,
Than thoſe regards you threw away on me;
Your valour, honour, wiſdom, prais'd by all:
But bid phyſicians talk our veins to temper,
And with an argument new-ſet a pulſe;
Then think, my lord, of reaſoning into love.

CARLOS.

Muſt I then deſpair? Do not ſhake me thus;
My tempeſt-beaten heart is cold to death:
Ah! turn, and let me warm me in thy beauties.
Heav'ns! what a proof I gave, but two nights paſt,
Of matchleſs love! To fling me at thy feet,
I ſlighted friendſhip, and I flew from fame;
Nor heard the ſummons of the next day's battle:
But darting headlong to thy arms, I left.
The promis'd fight; I left *Alonzo* too,
To ſtand the war, and quell a world alone. [*Trumpets.*

LEONORA.

The victor comes. My lord, I muſt withdraw.

CARLOS.

And muſt you go?

LEO-

LEONORA.

Why ſhou'd you wiſh me ſtay?
Your friend's arrival will bring comfort to you,
My preſence none; it pains you and myſelf:
For both our ſakes, permit me to withdraw. [*Exit* Leon.

CARLOS.

Sure, there's no peril, but in love. O how
My foes wou'd boaſt to ſee me look ſo pale!

Enter ALONZO.

CARLOS.

Alonzo!

ALONZO.

Carlos!—I am whole again:
Claſpt in thy arms, it makes my heart entire.

CARLOS.

Whom dare I thus embrace? The conqueror of *Africk?*

ALONZO.

Yes, much more; Don *Carlos'* friend.
The conqueſt of the world would coſt me dear,
Should it beget one thought of diſtance in thee:
I riſe in virtues to come nearer thee:
I conquer with Don *Carlos* in my eye;
And thus I claim my victory's reward. [*Embracing him.*

CARLOS.

A victory indeed! Your godlike arm
Has made one ſpot the grave of *Africa*,
Such numbers fell; and the ſurvivors fled
As frighted paſſengers from off the ſtrand,
When the tempeſtuous ſea comes roaring on them.

ALONZO.

'Twas *Carlos* conquer'd; 'twas his cruel chains
Inflam'd me to a rage unknown before,
And threw my former actions far behind.

CAR-

CARLOS.

I love fair *Leonora*: How I love her!
Yet ſtill I find (I know not how it is)
Another heart, another ſoul, for thee:
Thy friendſhip warms, it raiſes, it tranſports
Like muſic; pure the joy without allay;
Whoſe very rapture is tranquillity:
But love, like wine, gives a tumultuous bliſs,
Heighten'd indeed beyond all mortal pleaſures;
But mingles pangs and madneſs in the bowl.

Enter ZANGA.

ZANGA.

Manuel, my lord, returning from the port,
On buſineſs, both of moment and of haſte,
Humbly begs leave to ſpeak in private with you.

CARLOS.

In private?—Ha!—*Alonzo*, I'll return;
No buſineſs can detain me long from thee. [*Exit* Car.

ZANGA.

My lord *Alonzo*, I obey'd your orders.

ALONZO.

Will the fair *Leonora* paſs this way?

ZANGA.

She will, my lord; and ſoon.

ALONZO.

Come near me, *Zanga*;
For I dare open all my heart to thee.
Never was ſuch a day of triumph known!
There's not a wounded captive in my train,
That ſlowly follow'd my proud chariot wheels,
With half a life, and beggary, and chains,
But is a god to me: I am moſt wretched.

In

In his captivity, thou know'ſt, Don *Carlos*,
My friend, (and never was a friend more dear)
Deputed me his advocate in love,
To talk to *Leonora*'s heart, and make
A tender party in her thoughts, for him.
What did I do? I lov'd myſelf. Indeed,
One thing there is might leſſen my offence
(If ſuch offence admits of being leſſen'd);
I thought him dead; for (by what fate I know not)
His letters never reach'd me.

ZANGA. [*Aſide.*]

Thanks to *Zanga*.
Who thence contriv'd that evil which has happen'd.

ALONZO.

Yes, curs'd of heav'n! I lov'd myſelf; and now,
In a late action reſcu'd from the *Moors*,
I have brought home my rival in my friend.

ZANGA.

We hear, my lord, that in that action too,
Your interpoſing arm preſerv'd his life.

ALONZO.

It did—with more than the expence of mine;
For, O! this day is mention'd for their nuptials.
But ſee, ſhe comes—I'll take my leave, and die.

ZANGA. [*Aſide.*]

Hadſt thou a thouſand lives, thy death would pleaſe me.
Unhappy fate! My country overcome;
My ſix years hope of vengeance quite expir'd!—
Would nature were—I will not fall alone;
But others' groans ſhall tell the world my death.

Enter

Enter LEONORA.

ALONZO.

When nature ends with anguiſh like to this,
Sinners ſhall take their laſt leave of the ſun,
And bid the light adieu.

LEONORA.

The mighty conqueror
Diſmay'd! I thought you gave the foe your ſorrows.

ALONZO.

O cruel inſult! are thoſe tears your ſport,
Which nothing but a love for you could draw?
Africk I quell'd, in hope by that to purchaſe
Your leave to ſigh unſcorn'd; but I complain not:
'Twas but a world; and you are—*Leonora*.

LEONORA.

That paſſion, which you boaſt of, is your guilt;
A treaſon to your friend. You think mean of me,
To plead your crimes as motives of my love.

ALONZO.

You, Madam, ought to thank thoſe crimes you blame;
'Tis they permit you to be thus inhuman,
Without the cenſure both of earth and heav'n——
I fondly thought a laſt look might be kind.
Farewell for ever,—This ſevere behaviour
Has, to my comfort, made it ſweet to die.

LEONORA. [*Aſide.*]

Farewel for ever!—Sweet to die!—O heav'n!
Alonzo, ſtay; you muſt not thus eſcape me;
But hear your guilt at large.

ALONZO.

O *Leonora!*
What could I do? In duty to my friend,

I ſaw you; and to ſee, is to admire:
For *Carlos* did I plead, and moſt ſincerely;
Witneſs the thouſand agonies it coſt me:
You know I did; I ſought but your eſteem;
If that is guilt, an angel had been guilty:
I often ſigh'd; nay, wept; but could not help it;
And ſure it is no crime to be in pain:
But grant my crime was great, I'm greatly curs'd.
What would you more? Am I not moſt undone?
This uſage is like ſtamping on the murder'd,
When life is fled; moſt barbarous and unjuſt.

LEONORA. [*Going.*]

If from your guilt none ſuffer'd but yourſelf,
It might be ſo——Farewel.

ALONZO.

Who ſuffers with me?

LEONORA.

Enjoy your ignorance, and let me go.

ALONZO.

Alas! what is there I can fear to know,
Since I already know your hate? Your actions
Have long ſince told me that.

LEONORA.

They flatter'd you.

ALONZO.

How? Flatter'd me!

LEONORA.

O ſearch in fate no further!
I hate thee, O *Alonzo!* How I hate thee!

ALONZO.

Indeed! And do you weep for hatred too?
O what a doubtful torment heaves my heart!——
I hope it moſt—and yet I dread it more.

Shou'd

Shou'd it be ſo; ſhould her tears flow from thence;
How would my ſoul blaze up in ecſtaſy!
Ah, no! How ſink into the depth of horrors!

LEONORA.

Why would you force my ſtay?

ALONZO.

What mean theſe tears?

LEONORA.

I weep by chance; nor have my tears a meaning——
But, O! when I firſt ſaw *Alonzo*'s tears,
I knew their meaning well.

[Alon. *falls paſſionately on his knees, and takes her hand.*

ALONZO.

Heavens, what is this? That excellence for which
Deſire was planted in the heart of man;
Virtue's ſupreme reward on this ſide heav'n;
The cordial of my ſoul! and this deſtroys me——
Indeed I flatter'd me that thou didſt hate.

LEONORA.

Alonzo, pardon me the injury
Of loving you: I ſtruggled with my paſſion,
And ſtruggled long; let that be ſome excuſe.

ALONZO.

Unkind! You know I think your love a bleſſing
Beyond all human bleſſings; 'tis the price
Of ſighs and groans, and a whole year of dying:
But O the curſe of curſes!—O my friend!

LEONORA.

Alas!

ALONZO.

What ſays my love?——Speak, *Leonora*.

LEONORA.

Was it for you, my lord, to be ſo quick In

In finding out objections to our love?
Think you ſo ſtrong my love, or weak my virtue,
It was unſafe to leave that part to me?

ALONZO.

Is not the day then fix'd for your eſpouſals?

LEONORA.

Indeed, my father once had thought that way;
But marking how the marriage pain'd my heart,
Long he ſtood doubtful; but at laſt reſolv'd,
Your Counſel, which determines him in all,
Should finiſh the debate.

ALONZO.

O agony!
Muſt I not only loſe her, but be made
Myſelf the inſtrument? Not only die,
But plunge the dagger in my heart myſelf?
This is refining on calamity.

LEONORA.

What! do you tremble, leſt you ſhould be mine?
For what elſe can you tremble? Not for that
My father places in your power to alter.

ALONZO.

What's in my power?—O yes, to ſtab my friend?

LEONORA.

To ſtab your friend were barbarous indeed!
Spare him—and murder me—I own, *Alonzo*,
You may well wonder at ſuch words as theſe;
I ſtart at them myſelf; they fright my nature:
Great is my fault; but blame not me alone:
Give him a little blame, who took ſuch pains
To make me guilty.

ALONZO.

Torment!

[*After a pauſe*, Leon. *ſpeaks.*

LEONORA.

O my ſhame!
I ſue, and ſue in vain; it is moſt juſt:
When women ſue, they ſue to be deny'd.
You hate me, you deſpiſe me: You do well;
For what I've done, I hate and ſcorn myſelf.
O night, fall on me! I ſhall bluſh to death.

ALONZO.

Firſt periſh all.

LEONORA.

Say; what have you reſolv'd?
My father comes; what anſwer will you give him?

ALONZO.

What anſwer? Let me look upon that face,
And read it there—Devote thee to another!
Not to be borne! A ſecond look undoes me.

LEONORA.

And why undo you? Is it then, my lord,
So terrible to yield to your own wiſhes,
Becauſe they happen to concur with mine?
Cruel! to take ſuch pains to win a heart,
Which you were conſcious you muſt break with parting.

ALONZO. [*Runs and embraces her.*

No, *Leonora*; I am thine for ever,
In ſpight of *Carlos*—Ha! Who's that? My friend!
[*Starts wide from her.*
Alas! I ſee him pale; I hear his groans:
He foams, he tears his hair, he raves, he bleeds;
(I know him by myſelf) he dies diſtracted.

LEONORA.

How dreadful to be cut from what we love!

ALONZO.

Ah! ſpeak no more. LE-

LEONORA.

And ty'd to what we hate!

ALONZO.

Oh!

LEONORA.

It is impoſſible!

ALONZO.

Death!

LEONORA.

Can you?

ALONZO.

Oh———

Yes, take a limb; but let my virtue 'ſcape.
Alas! my ſoul, this moment I die for thee. [*Breaks away.*

LEONORA.

And are you perjur'd then for virtue's ſake?
How often have you ſworn? But go for ever—[*Swoons.*

ALONZO.

Heart of my heart, and eſſence of my joy!
Where art thou?—O, I'm thine, and thine for ever!
The groans of friendſhip ſhall be heard no more;
For whatſoever crimes I can commit,
I've felt the pains already.

LEONORA.

Hold, *Alonzo*;
And hear a maid, whom doubly thou haſt conquer'd:
I love thy virtue, as I love thy perſon;
And I adore thee for the pains it gave me:
But as I felt the pain, I'll reap the fruit;
I'll ſhine out in my turn, and ſhew the world
Thy great example was not loſt upon me.
Be it enough, that I have once been guilty;
In ſight of ſuch a pattern, to perſiſt,

Ill ſuits a perſon honour'd with your love.
My other titles to that bliſs are weak;
I muſt deſerve it by refuſing it:
Thus then I tear me from thy hopes for ever.
Shall I contribute to *Alonzo*'s crimes?
No, tho' the life-blood guſhes from my heart.
You ſhall not be aſham'd of *Leonora*,
Or, that late time may put our names together.
Nay, never ſhrink; take back the bright example
You lately lent: O take it while you may;
While I can give it you, and be immortal. [*Exit.*

ALONZO.

She's gone, and I ſhall ſee that face no more;
But pine in abſence, and till death adore.
When with cold dew my fainting brow is hung,
And my eyes darken, from my fault'ring tongue,
Her name will tremble in a feeble moan,
And Love, with Fate, divide my dying groan.

ACT II. SCENE I.

Enter MANUEL *and* ZANGA.

ZANGA.

IF this be true, I cannot blame your pain
For wretched *Carlos*; 'tis but human in you.
But when arriv'd your diſmal news?

MANUEL.

This hour.

ZAN-

ZANGA.

What, not a veſſel ſav'd?

MANUEL.

All, All, the ſtorm
Devour'd; and now, o'er his late envy'd fortune,
The dolphin's bound, and watry mountains roar,
Triumphant in his ruin.

ZANGA.

Is *Alvarez*
Determin'd to deny his daughter to him?
That treaſure was on ſhore; muſt that too join
The common wreck?

MANUEL.

Alvarez pleads indeed,
That *Leonora*'s heart is diſinclin'd,
And pleads that only; ſo it was this morning,
When he concurr'd: The tempeſt broke the match,
And ſunk his favour, when it ſunk the gold:
The love of gold is double in his heart;
The vice of age, and of *Alvarez* too.

ZANGA.

How does Don *Carlos* bear it?

MANUEL.

Like a man,
Whoſe heart feels moſt a human heart can feel,
And reaſons beſt a human head can reaſon.

ZANGA.

But is he then in abſolute deſpair?

MANUEL.

Never to ſee his *Leonora* more:
And, quite to quench all future hope, *Alvarez*
Urges *Alonzo* to eſpouſe his daughter
This very day; for he has learnt their loves.

ZANGA.

Ha! was not that receiv'd with ecſtaſy
By Don *Alonzo?*

MANUEL.

Yes, at firſt; but ſoon
A damp came o'er him; it would kill his friend.

ZANGA.

Not if his friend conſented; and ſince now
He can't himſelf eſpouſe her———

MANUEL.

Yet to aſk it
Has ſomething ſhocking to a generous mind;
At leaſt *Alonzo*'s ſpirit ſtartles at it.
Wide is the diſtance between our deſpair,
And giving up a miſtreſs to another.
But I muſt leave you. *Carlos* wants ſupport
In his ſevere affliction. [*Exit* Manuel.

ZANGA.

Ha! it dawns!———
It riſes to me like a new-found world
To mariners long time diſtreſs'd at ſea,
Sore from a ſtorm, and all their viands ſpent;——
Or like the ſun juſt riſing out of chaos,
Some dregs of antient night not quite purg'd off:
But I ſhall finiſh it—Ho! *Iſabella!*

[*Enter* Iſabella.

I thought of dying; better things come forward;
Vengeance is ſtill alive; from her dark covert,
With all her ſnakes erect upon her creſt,
She ſtalks in view, and fires me with her charms,
When, *Iſabel*, arriv'd Don *Carlos* here?

ISABELLA.

Two nights ago. ZAN-

ZANGA.

That was the very night
Before the battle—Memory, ſet down that;
It has the eſſence of a crocodile,
Tho' yet but in the ſhell—I'll give it birth——
What time did he return?

ISABELLA.

At midnight.

ZANGA.

So——
Say, did he ſee, that night, his *Leonora?*

ISABELLA.

No, my good lord.

ZANGA.

No matter—Tell me, woman,
Is not *Alonzo* rather brave than cautious;
Honeſt than ſubtle; above fraud himſelf;
Slow therefore to ſuſpect it in another?

ISABELLA.

You beſt can judge; but ſo the world thinks of him.

ZANGA.

Why that is well——Go fetch my tablets hither.

[*Exit* Iſabella.

Two nights ago, my father's ſacred ſhade
Thrice ſtalk'd around my bed, and ſmil'd upon me;
He ſmil'd, a joy then little underſtood——
It muſt be ſo—and if ſo, it is vengeance
Worth waking of the dead for.

Re-enter Iſabella *with the tablets.* Zanga *writes; then reads as to himſelf.*

Thus it ſtands——
The father's fixt—Don *Carlos* cannot wed—
Alonzo may—but that will hurt his friend—

Nor can he aſk his leave—If he did,
He might not gain it—It is hard to give
Our own conſent to ills, tho' we muſt bear them.—
Were it not then a maſter-piece, worth all
The wiſdom I can boaſt, firſt to perſuade
Alonzo to requeſt it of his friend,
His friend to grant—then, from that very grant,
The ſtrongeſt proof of friendſhip man can give,
(And other motives) to work out a cauſe
Of jealouſy, to rack *Alonzo*'s peace?———
I have turn'd o'er the catalogue of woes,
Which ſting the heart of man, and find none equal:
It is the *Hydra* of calamities;
The ſeven-fold death: The jealous are the damn'd.
O jealouſy, each other paſſion's calm
To thee, thou conflagration of the ſoul!
Thou king of torments! thou grand counterpoize
For all the tranſports beauty can inſpire!

ISABELLA.

Alonzo comes this way.

ZANGA.

Moſt opportunely.
Withdraw—Ye ſubtle *Dæmons*, which reſide [*Ex.* Iſa.
In courts, and do your work with bows and ſmiles,
That little engin'ry, more miſchievous
Than fleets and armies, and the cannon's murder,
Teach me to look a lye; give me your maze
Of gloomy thought, and intricate deſign,
To catch the man I hate, and then devour.
[*Enter* Alonzo.
My lord, I give you joy.

ALON-

ALONZO.

Of what, good *Zanga*?

ZANGA.

Is not the lovely *Leonora* yours?

ALONZO.

What will become of *Carlos*?

ZANGA.

He's your friend;
And ſince he can't eſpouſe the fair himſelf,
Will take ſome comfort from *Alonzo*'s fortune.

ALONZO.

Alas! thou little know'ſt the force of love;
Love reigns a ſultan with unrivall'd ſway,
Puts all relations, friendſhip ſelf, to death,
If once he's jealous of it. I love *Carlos*;
Yet well I know what pangs I felt this morning
At his intended nuptials: For myſelf
I then felt pains, which now for him I feel.

ZANGA.

You will not wed her then?

ALONZO.

Not inſtantly:
Inſult his broken heart the very moment!

ZANGA.

I underſtand you: But you'll wed hereafter,
When your friend's gone, and his firſt pain aſſwag'd?

ALONZO.

Am I to blame for that?

ZANGA.

My lord, I love
Your very errors; they are born from virtue:
Your friendſhip (and what nobler paſſion claims
The heart?) does lead you blindfold to your ruin.

Conſider, wherefore did *Alvarez* break
Don *Carlos'* match, and wherefore urge *Alonzo's*?
'Twas the ſame cauſe; the love of wealth: To-mor-
May ſee *Alonzo* in Don *Carlos'* fortune; (row
A higher bidder is a better friend;
And there are princes ſigh for *Leonora*.
When your friend's gone, you'll wed; why then the
Which gives you *Leonora* now, will ceaſe. (cauſe,
Carlos has loſt her; ſhould you loſe her too,
Why then you heap new torments on your friend,
By that reſpect which labour'd to relieve him——
'Tis well; he is diſturb'd; it makes him pauſe. [*Aſide.*

ALONZO.

Think'ſt thou, my *Zanga*, ſhould I aſk Don *Carlos*,
His goodneſs will conſent that I ſhould wed her?

ZANGA.

I know it would.

ALONZO.

But then the cruelty
To aſk it; and for *me* to aſk it of him!

ZANGA.

Methinks, you are ſevere upon your friend:
Who was it gave him liberty and life?

ALONZO.

That is the very reaſon which forbids it:
Were I a ſtranger, I could freely ſpeak:
In me, it ſo reſembles a demand,
Exacting of a debt, it ſhocks my nature.

ZANGA.

My lord, you know the ſad alternative.
Is *Leonora* worth one pang, or not?
It hurts not me, my lord, but as I love you;

Warmly

Warmly as you, I wiſh Don *Carlos* well;
But I am likewiſe Don *Alonzo*'s friend:
There all the difference lies between us two:
In me, my lord, you hear another ſelf,
And, give me leave to add, a better too,
Clear'd from thoſe errors, which, tho' caus'd by virtue,
Are ſuch as may hereafter give you pain.———
Don *Lopez*, of *Caſtile*, would not demur thus.

ALONZO.

Periſh the name! What! ſacrifice the fair
To age and illneſs, becauſe ſet in gold?
I'll to Don *Carlos*, if my heart will let me:
I have not ſeen him ſince his ſore affliction;
But ſhunn'd it, as too terrible to bear:
How ſhall I bear it now? I'm ſtruck already. [*Ex.* Al.

ZANGA.

Half my work is done. I muſt ſecure
Don *Carlos*, ere *Alonzo* ſpeaks with him.
[*He gives a meſſage to a ſervant, then returns.*
Proud, hated *Spain!* oft drench'd in *Mooriſh* blood;
Doſt thou not feel a deadly foe within thee?
Shake not thy tow'rs where-e'er I paſs along,
Conſcious of ruin, and their great deſtroyer?
Shake to the centre, if *Alonzo*'s dear.
Look down, O holy prophet! ſee me torture
This Chriſtian dog, this infidel, which dares
To ſmite thy votaries, and ſpurn thy law;
And yet hopes pleaſure from too radiant eyes,
Which look as they were lighted up for thee!
Shall he enjoy thy paradiſe below?
Blaſt the bold thought, and curſe him with her charms.
But ſee the melancholy Lover comes.

Enter Don CARLOS.

CARLOS.

Hope, thou haſt told me lies from day to day,
For more than twenty years; vile promiſer!
None here are happy, but the very fool,
Or very wiſe; and I want fool enough,
To ſmile in vanities, and hug a ſhadow;
Nor have I wiſdom to elaborate
An artificial happineſs from pains:
Ev'n joys are pains, becauſe they cannot laſt. [*Sighs.*
Yet much is talk'd of bliſs; it is the art
Of ſuch as have the world in their poſſeſſion,
To give it a good name, that fools may envy;
For envy to ſmall minds is flattery.
How many lift the head, look gay, and ſmile,
Againſt their conſciences? And this we know;
Yet, knowing, diſbelieve; and try again
What we have try'd, and ſtruggle with conviction;
Each new experience gives the former credit,
And reverend grey Threeſcore is but a voucher,
That Thirty told us true.

ZANGA.

My noble lord,
I mourn your fate: But are no hopes ſurviving?

CARLOS.

No hopes. *Alvarez* has a heart of ſteel:
'Tis fixt; 'tis paſt; 'tis abſolute deſpair.

ZANGA.

You wanted not to have your heart made tender
By your own pains, to feel a friend's diſtreſs.

CARLOS.

I underſtand you well. *Alonzo* loves;
I pity him.

ZAN-

ZANGA.

I dare be ſworn you do:
Yet he has other thoughts.

CARLOS.

What canſt thou mean?

ZANGA.

Indeed he has; and fears to aſk a favour,
A ſtranger from a ſtranger might requeſt;
What coſts you Nothing, yet is All to him:
Nay, what indeed will to your glory add,
For nothing more than wiſhing your friend well.

CARLOS.

I pray be plain: His happineſs is mine.

ZANGA.

He loves to death; but ſo reveres his friend,
He can't perſuade his heart to wed the maid,
Without your leave, and that he fears to aſk
In perfect tenderneſs: I urg'd him to it,
Knowing the deadly ſickneſs of his heart,
Your overflowing goodneſs to your friend,
Your wiſdom, and deſpair yourſelf to wed her;
I wrung a promiſe from him he would try;
And now I come a mutual friend to both,
Without his privacy, to let you know it,
And to prepare you kindly to receive him.

CARLOS.

Ha! if he weds, I am undone indeed:
Not Don *Alvarez* ſelf can then relieve me.

ZANGA.

Alas! my lord, *you know his heart is ſteel;*
Tis fixt; 'tis paſt; 'tis abſolute deſpair.

CARLOS.

O cruel heav'n! and is it not enough

That

That I muſt never, never ſee her more?
Say, is it not enough that I muſt die;
But muſt I be tormented in the grave;
Aſk my conſent!—Muſt I then give her to him?
Lead to his nuptial ſheets the bluſhing maid?
O! *Leonora!* never, never, never!

ZANGA. [*Aſide.*]

A ſtorm of plagues upon him! He refuſes.

CARLOS.

What! wed her?———and to-day?

ZANGA.

To-day, or never:
To-morrow may ſome wealthier lover bring,
And then *Alonzo* is thrown out like you;
Then whom ſhall he condemn for his misfortune?
Carlos is an *Alvarez* to his love.

CARLOS.

O torment! whither ſhall I turn?

ZANGA.

To peace.

CARLOS.

Which is the way?

ZANGA.

His happineſs is yours.
I dare not diſbelieve you.

CARLOS.

Kill my friend!
Or worſe! Alas! and can there be a worſe?———
A worſe there is! nor can my nature bear it.

ZANGA.

You have convinc'd me, 'tis a dreadful taſk.
I find *Alonzo*'s quitting her this morning,
For *Carlos*' ſake, in tenderneſs to you,

Betray'd

Betray'd me to believe it leſs ſevere
Than I perceive it is.

CARLOS.

Thou doſt upbraid me.

ZANGA.

No, my good lord; but ſince you can't comply,
'Tis my misfortune that I mention'd it;
For had I not, *Alonzo* would indeed
Have dy'd, as now; but not by your decree.

CARLOS.

By my decree! Do I decree his death?
I do——Shall I then lead her to his arms?
O! which ſide ſhall I take? be ſtabb'd? or—ſtab?
'Tis equal death, a choice of agonies.——
Ah, no! all other agonies are eaſe
To one—O *Leonora!*—Never, never!
Go, *Zanga*, go; defer the dreadful trial,
Tho' but a day; ſomething perchance may happen
To ſoften all to friendſhip, and to love:
Go; ſtop my friend; let me not ſee him now;
But ſave us from an interview of death.

ZANGA.

My lord, I'm bound in duty to obey you——
If I not bring him, may *Alonzo* proſper. [*Aſide.*

[*Exit* Zanga.

CARLOS.

What is this world?—Thy ſchool, O miſery!
Our only leſſon is to learn to ſuffer;
And he who knows not that, was born for nothing.
Tho' deep my pangs, and heavy at my heart,
My comfort is, each moment takes away
A grain at leaſt from the dead load that's on me,

And

And gives a nearer proſpect of the grave.
But put it moſt ſeverely—ſhould I live——
Live long——Alas! there is no length in time;
Not in thy time, O man! What's fourſcore years?
Nay, what indeed the age of time itſelf,
Since cut from out eternity's wide round?
Away then. To a mind reſolv'd and wiſe,
There is an impotence in miſery,
Which makes me ſmile, when all its ſhafts are in me.
Yet, *Leonora*——She can make time long;
Its nature alter, as ſhe alter'd mine:
While in the luſtre of her charms I lay,
Whole ſummer ſuns roll'd unperceiv'd away;
I years for days, and days for moments told,
And was ſurpriz'd to hear that I grew old;
Now fate does rigidly its dues regain,
And every moment is an age of pain.

As he is going out, Enter ZANGA *and* ALONZO. ZANGA *ſtops* CARLOS.

ZANGA.

Is this Don *Carlos?* This the boaſted friend?
How can you turn your back upon his ſadneſs?
Look on him; and then leave him, if you can.
Whoſe ſorrows thus depreſs him? Not his own:
This moment he *could* wed, without your leave.

CARLOS.

I cannot yield, nor can I bear his griefs.
Alonzo! [*Going to him, and taking his hand.*

ALONZO.

O *Carlos!*

CARLOS.

Pray, forbear

ALON-

ALONZO.

Art thou undone, and ſhall *Alonzo* ſmile?
Alonzo! who perhaps in ſome degree
Contributed to cauſe thy dreadful fate?
I was deputed guardian of thy love;
But, O! I lov'd myſelf. Pour down, *Afflictions!*
On this devoted head; make me your mark;
And be the world by my example taught,
How ſacred it ſhould hold the name of friend!

CARLOS.

You charge yourſelf unjuſtly; well I know
The only cauſe of my ſevere affliction.
Alvarez, curs'd *Alvarez*——So much anguiſh,
Felt for ſo ſmall a failure, is one merit
Which faultleſs virtue wants. The crime was mine,
Who plac'd thee there, where only thou could'ſt fail;
Tho' well I knew that dreadful poſt of honour
I gave thee to maintain. Ah! who could bear
Thoſe eyes unhurt? The wounds myſelf have felt,
Which wounds alone ſhould cauſe me to condemn thee;
They plead in thy excuſe; for I too ſtrove
To ſhun thoſe fires, and found 'twas not in man.

ALONZO.

You caſt in ſhades the failures of a friend,
And ſoften all; but think not you deceive me:
I know my guilt; and I implore your pardon,
As the ſole glimpſe I can obtain of peace.

CARLOS.

Pardon for him who, but this morning, threw
Fair *Leonora* from his heart, all bath'd
In ceaſeleſs tears, and bluſhing with her love?
Who, like a roſe-leaf, wet with morning dew,

Would

Would have ſtuck cloſe, and clung for ever there?
But 'twas in thee, thro' fondneſs to thy friend,
To ſhut thy boſom againſt ecſtaſies;
For which, whilſt this pulſe beats, it beats to thee;
While this blood flows, it flows for my *Alonzo*;
And every wiſh is levell'd at thy joy.

ZANGA. [*To* Alonzo.]

My lord, my lord, this is your time to ſpeak.

ALONZO. [*To* Zanga.]

Becauſe he's kind? It therefore is the worſt;
For 'tis his kindneſs which I fear to hurt:
Shall the ſame moment ſee him ſink in woes,
And me providing for a flood of joys,
Rich in the plunder of his happineſs?
No; I may die; but I can never ſpeak.

CARLOS. [*Aſide.*]

Now, now it comes! they are concerting it;
The firſt word ſtrikes me dead——O *Leonora!*
And ſhall another taſte her fragrant breath?
Who knows what after-time may bring to paſs?
Fathers may change, and I may wed her ſtill.

ALONZO. [*To* Zanga.]

Do I not ſee him quite poſſeſs'd with anguiſh,
Which, like a dæmon, writhes him to and fro;
And ſhall I pour in new? No, fond deſire;
No, love! One pang at parting, and farewel:
I have no other love but *Carlos* now.

CARLOS.

Alas, my friend! why, with ſuch eager graſps,
Doſt preſs my hand, and weep upon my cheek?

ALONZO.

If, after death, our forms (as ſome believe)

Shall

Shall be tranſparent, naked every thought,
And friends meet friends, and read each other's hearts,
Thou'lt know, one day, that thou waſt held moſt dear.
Farewel.

CARLOS.

Alonzo, ſtay—He cannot ſpeak— [*Holds him.*
Leſt it ſhould grieve me—Shall I be out-done?
And loſe in glory, as I loſe in love? [*Aſide.*
I take it much unkindly, my *Alonzo*,
You think ſo meanly of me, not to ſpeak,
When, well I know, your heart is near to burſting.
Have you forgot how you have bound me to you?
Your ſmalleſt friendſhip's liberty and life.

ALONZO.

There, there it is, my friend; it cuts me there.
How dreadful is it, to a generous mind,
To aſk, when ſure it cannot be deny'd!

CARLOS.

How greatly thought! In all he tow'rs above me. [*Aſide.*
Then you confeſs you would aſk ſomething of me.

ALONZO.

No, on my ſoul.

ZANGA. [*To* Alonzo.]
Then loſe her.

CARLOS.

Glorious ſpirit!
Why, what a pang has he run through for this!
By heav'n, I envy him his agonies.
Why was not mine the moſt illuſtrious lot,
Of ſtarting at one action from below,
And flaming up into conſummate greatneſs?
Ha! Angels, ſtrengthen me!——It ſhall be ſo——

I can't

I can't want ſtrength. Great actions, once conceiv'd,
Strengthen like wine, and animate the ſoul,
And call themſelves to being. [*Aſide.*] My *Alonzo!*
Since thy great ſoul diſdains to make requeſt,
Receive with favour that I make to thee.

ALONZO.

What means my *Carlos?*

CARLOS,

Pray obſerve me well:
Fate and *Alvarez* tore her from my heart;
And, plucking up my love, they had well nigh
Pluck'd up life too; for they were twin'd together:
Of that no more——What now does reaſon bid?
I cannot wed——Farewel, my happineſs;
But, O my ſoul! with care provide for hers:
In life, how weak, how helpleſs, is a woman!
Soon hurt, in happineſs itſelf unſafe,
And often wounded, while ſhe plucks the roſe;
So properly the object of affliction,
That heav'n is pleas'd to make diſtreſs become her,
And dreſſes her moſt amiably in tears.
Take then my heart in dowry with the fair;
Be thou her guardian, and thou muſt be mine;
Shut out the thouſand preſſing ills of life
With thy ſurrounding arms——Do this; and then
Set down the liberty and life thou gav'ſt me
As little things, as eſſays of thy goodneſs,
And rudiments of friendſhip ſo divine.

ALONZO.

There is a grandeur in thy goodneſs to me,
Which with thy foes would render thee ador'd:
But have a care; nor think I can be pleas'd

With

With any thing that lays in pains for thee:
Thou doſt diſſemble, and thy heart's in tears.

CARLOS.

My heart's in health, my ſpirits dance their round,
And at my eye pleaſure looks out in ſmiles.

ALONZO.

And canſt thou, canſt thou part with *Leonora?*

CARLOS.

I do not part with her; I give her thee.

ALONZO.

O *Carlos!*

CARLOS.

Don't diſtruſt me; I'm ſincere;
Nor is it more than ſimple juſtice in me:
This morn didſt thou reſign her for my ſake;
I but perform a virtue learnt from thee;
Diſcharge a debt, and pay her to thy wiſhes.

ALONZO.

Ah! how?——But think not words were ever made
For ſuch occaſions: Silence, tears, embraces,
Are languid eloquence: I'll ſeek relief
In abſence from the pain of ſo much goodneſs;
There thank the bleſt above, thy ſole ſuperiors,
Adore, and raiſe my thoughts of them by thee. [*Exit.*

ZANGA. [*Aſide.*]

Thus far ſucceſs has crown'd my boldeſt hope:
My next care is, to haſten theſe new nuptials;
And then my maſter-works begin to play.
Why this was greatly done, without one ſigh [*To* Car.
To carry ſuch a glory to its period.

CARLOS.

Too ſoon thou praiſeſt me. He's gone; and now

I muſt

I muſt unſluice my over burden'd heart,
And let it flow: I would not grieve my friend
With tears, nor interrupt my great deſign;
Great, ſure, as ever human breaſt durſt think of.
But now my ſorrows, long with pain ſuppreſt,
Burſt their confinement with impetuous ſway,
O'erſwell all bounds, and bear e'en life away:
So, till the day was won, the *Greek* renown'd,
With anguiſh, wore the arrow in his wound;
Then drew the ſhaft from out his tortur'd ſide,
Let guſh the torrent of his blood, and dy'd.

[*Exeunt.*

ACT III. SCENE I.

Enter ZANGA *and* ISABELLA.

ZANGA.

O Joy, thou welcome ſtranger! twice three years
I have not felt thy vital beam; but now
It warms my veins, and plays around my heart;
A fiery inſtinct lifts me from the ground,
And I could mount——The ſpirits numberleſs
Of my dear countrymen, which yeſterday
Left their poor bleeding bodies on the field,
Are all aſſembled here, and o'er inform me.——
O bridegroom! great indeed thy preſent bliſs;
Yet ev'n by me unenvy'd; for be ſure
It is thy laſt, thy laſt ſmile, that which now
Sits on thy cheek; enjoy it while thou may'ſt;

Anguiſh,

Anguiſh, and groans, and death, beſpeak to-morrow.
My *Iſabella!*

ISABELLA.

What commands my *Moor?*

ZANGA.

My fair ally! my lovely miniſter!
'Twas well *Alvarez*, by my arts impell'd,
(To plunge Don *Carlos* in the laſt deſpair,
And ſo prevent all future moleſtation)
Finiſh'd the nuptials ſoon as he reſolv'd them;
This conduct ripen'd all for me, and ruin.
Scarce had the prieſt the holy rite perform'd,
When I, by ſacred inſpiration, forg'd
That letter, which I truſted to thy hand;
That letter, which, in glowing terms, conveys,
From happy *Carlos* to fair *Leonora*,
The moſt profound acknowlegement of heart
For wond'rous tranſports, which he never knew.
This is a good ſubſervient artifice,
To aid the nobler workings of my brain.

ISABELLA.

I quickly dropt it in the bride's apartment,
As you commanded.

ZANGA.

With a lucky hand;
For ſoon *Alonzo* found it. I obſerv'd him
From out my ſecret ſtand: He took it up;
But ſcarce was it unfolded to his ſight,
When he, as if an arrow pierc'd his eye,
Started, and, trembling, dropt it on the ground.
Pale and aghaſt awhile my victim ſtood,
Diſguis'd a ſigh or two, and puff'd them from him;

Then

Then rubb'd his brow, and took it up again:
At firſt he look'd as if he meant to read it;
But, check'd by riſing fears, he cruſh'd it thus;
And thruſt it, like an adder, in his boſom.

ISABELLA.

But if he read it not, it cannot ſting him;
At leaſt not mortally.

ZANGA.

At firſt I thought it ſo;
But farther thought informs me otherwiſe,
And turns this diſappointment to account.
He more ſhall credit it, becauſe unſeen,
(If 'tis unſeen) as thou anon may'ſt find.

ISABELLA.

That would indeed commend my *Zanga*'s ſkill.

ZANGA.

This, *Iſabella*, is Don *Carlos*' picture;
Take it, and ſo diſpoſe of it, that, found,
It may riſe up a witneſs of her love,
Under her pillow, in her cabinet,
Or elſewhere, as ſhall beſt promote our end.

ISABELLA.

I'll weigh it as its conſequence requires;
Then do my utmoſt to deſerve your ſmile. [*Exit.* Iſab.

ZANGA.

Is that *Alonzo* proſtrate on the ground?——
How he ſtarts up like flame from ſleeping embers,
And wild diſtraction glares from either eye.
If thus a ſlight ſurmiſe can work his ſoul,
How will the fulneſs of the tempeſt tear him!

Enter

Enter ALONZO.

ALONZO.

And yet it cannot be——I am deceiv'd——
I injure her: She wears the face of heav'n.

ZANGA. [*Aſide.*]

He doubts.

ALONZO.

I dare not look on this again:
If the firſt glance, which gave ſuſpicion only,
Had ſuch effect, ſo ſmote my heart and brain,
The certainty would daſh me all in pieces.
It cannot—Ha! it muſt, it muſt be true. [*Starts.*

ZANGA. [*Aſide.*]

Hold there, and we ſucceed. He has deſcry'd me,
And (for he thinks I love him) will unfold
His aching heart, and reſt it on my counſel.
I'll ſeem to go, to make my ſtay more ſure.

ALONZO.

Hold, *Zanga*; turn.

ZANGA.

My lord.

ALONZO.

Shut cloſe the door,
That not a ſpirit find an entrance here.

ZANGA.

My lord's obey'd.

ALONZO.

I ſee that thou art frighted:
If thou doſt love me, I ſhall fill thy heart
With ſcorpions ſtings.

ZANGA.

If I do love, my lord?

ALONZO.

Come near me; let me reſt upon thy boſom; (What

(What pillow like the boſom of a friend?)
For I am ſick at heart.

ZANGA.

Speak, Sir, O ſpeak,
And take me from the rack.

ALONZO.

And is there need
Of words? Behold a wonder! See my tears!

ZANGA.

I feel them too: Heav'n grant my ſenſes fail me!
I rather would loſe them, than have this real.

ALONZO.

Go, take a round thro' all things in thy thought,
And find that one; for there is only one
Which could extort my tears; find that, and tell
Thyſelf my mis'ry, and ſpare me the pain.

ZANGA.

Sorrow can think but ill——I am bewilder'd;
I know not where I am.

ALONZO.

Think, think no more;
It ne'er can enter in an honeſt heart.
I'll tell thee then——I cannot——Yet I do,
By wanting force to give it utterance.

ZANGA.

Speak; eaſe your heart; its throbs will break your (boſom.

ALONZO.

I am moſt happy; mine is victory,
Mine the king's favour, mine the nation's ſhout,
And great men make their fortunes of my ſmiles.
O curſe of curſes! In the lap of bleſſing
To be moſt curſt!——My *Leonora*'s falſe!

ZANGA.

ſave me, my lord. ALON-

ALONZO.

My *Leonora*'s falſe. [*Gives him the letter.*

ZANGA.

Then heav'n has loſt its image here on earth.

While Zanga *reads the letter, he trembles, and ſhews the utmoſt concern.*

ALONZO.

Good-natur'd man! He makes my pains his own,
I durſt not read it; but I read it now
In thy concern.

ZANGA.

Did you not read it then?

ALONZO.

Mine eye juſt touch'd it, and could bear no more.

ZANGA. [*Tears the letter.*]

Thus periſh all that gives *Alonzo* pain.

ALONZO.

Why didſt thou tear it?

ZANGA.

Think of it no more:
'Twas your miſtake, and groundleſs are your fears.

ALONZO.

And didſt thou tremble then for my miſtake?
Or give the whole contents; or, by the pangs
That feed upon my heart, thy life's in danger.

ZANGA.

Is this *Alonzo*'s language to his *Zanga?*
Draw forth your ſword, and find the ſecret here:
For whoſe ſake is it, think you, I conceal it?
Wherefore this rage? Becauſe I ſeek your peace;
I have no intereſt in ſuppreſſing it,
But what good-natur'd tenderneſs for you
Obliges me to have. Not mine the heart

That will be rent in two; not mine the fame
That will be damn'd, tho' all the world ſhould know it.

ALONZO.

Then my worſt fears are true, and life is paſt.

ZANGA.

What has the raſhneſs of my paſſion utter'd?
I know not what; but rage is our diſtraction,
And all its words are wind——Yet, ſure, I think,
I nothing own'd—But grant I did confeſs;
What is a letter? Letters may be forg'd.
For heav'n's ſweet ſake, my lord, lift up your heart:
Some foe to your repoſe————

ALONZO.

So heav'n look on me,
As I can't find the man I have offended.

ZANGA.

Indeed! [*Aſide*]—Our innocence is not our ſhield:
They take offence, who have not been offended;
They ſeek our ruin too, who ſpeak us fair;
And death is often ambuſh'd in their ſmiles.
We know not whom we have to fear. 'Tis certain,
A letter may be forg'd; and in a point
Of ſuch a dreadful conſequence as this,
One would rely on nought that *might* be falſe—
Think; have you any other cauſe to doubt her?——
Away; you can find none: Reſume your ſpirit,
All's well again.

ALONZO.

O that it were!

ZANGA.

It is;
For who would credit that, which, credited,

Makes

Makes hell ſuperfluous by ſuperior pains,
Without ſuch proofs as cannot be withſtood?
Has ſhe not ever been to virtue train'd?
Is not her fame as ſpotleſs as the ſun,
Her ſex's envy, and the boaſt of *Spain?*

ALONZO.

O *Zanga!* It is that confounds me moſt,
That full in oppoſition to appearance———

ZANGA.

No more, my lord; for you condemn yourſelf.
What is abſurdity, but to believe
Againſt appearance?—You can't yet, I find,
Subdue your paſſion to your better ſenſe;———
And, truth to tell, it does not much diſpleaſe me:
'Tis fit our indiſcretions ſhould be check'd,
With ſome degrees of pain.

ALONZO.

What indiſcretion?

ZANGA.

Come, you muſt bear to hear your faults from me.
Had you not ſent Don *Carlos* to the court
The night before the battle, that foul ſlave,
Who forg'd the ſenſeleſs ſcroll which gives you pain,
Had wanted footing for his villainy.

ALONZO.

I ſent him not.

ZANGA.

Not ſend him!—Ha!—That ſtrikes me.
I thought he came on meſſage to the king:
Is there another cauſe could juſtify
His ſhunning danger, and the promis'd fight?

But I perhaps may think too rigidly;
So long an abſence, and impatient love———

ALONZO.

In my confuſion, that had quite eſcap'd me:
By heav'n my wounded ſoul does bleed afreſh;
'Tis clear as day——for *Carlos* is ſo brave,
He lives not but on fame, he hunts for danger,
And is enamour'd of the face of death:
How then could he decline the next day's battle,
But for the tranſports?—O, it muſt be ſo—
Inhuman, by the loſs of his own honour,
To buy the ruin of his friend!

ZANGA.

You wrong him:
He knew not of your love.

ALONZO.

Ha!—

ZANGA. [*Aſide.*]

That ſtings home.

ALONZO.

Indeed, he knew not of my treacherous love———
Proofs riſe on proofs, and ſtill the laſt the ſtrongeſt,
Th' eternal law of things declares it true,
Which calls for judgments on diſtinguiſh'd guilt,
And loves to make our crime our puniſhment.
Love is my torture; Love was firſt my crime:
For ſhe was his, my friend's, and he (O horror!)
Confided all in me. O ſacred faith!
How dearly I abide thy violation!

ZANGA.

Were then their loves far gone?

ALON-

ALONZO.

The father's will
There bore a total ſway; and he, as ſoon
As news arriv'd, that *Carlos'* fleet was ſeen
From off our coaſt, fir'd with the love of gold,
Determin'd, that the very ſun which ſaw
Carlos' return, ſhould ſee his daughter wed.

ZANGA.

Indeed, my lord! Then you muſt pardon me,
If I preſume to mitigate the crime:
Conſider, ſtrong allurements ſoften guilt;
Long was his abſence, ardent was his love,
At midnight his return, the next day deſtin'd
For his eſpouſals——'twas a ſtrong temptation.

ALONZO.

Temptation!

ZANGA.

'Twas but gaining of one night.

ALONZO.

One night!

ZANGA.

That crime could ne'er return again.

ALONZO.

Again! By heav'n, thou doſt inſult thy lord.
Temptation! One night gain'd! O ſtings and death!
And am I then undone? Alas, my *Zanga!*
And doſt thou own it too? Deny it ſtill,
And reſcue me one moment from diſtraction.

ZANGA.

My lord, I hope the beſt.

ALONZO.

Falſe, fooliſh hope,
And inſolent to me? Thou know'ſt it falſe;

It is as glaring as the noon-tide ſun.
Devil; this morning after three years coldneſs,
To ruſh at once into a paſſion for me!
'Twas time to feign; 'twas time to get another,
When her firſt fool was ſated with her beauties.

ZANGA.

What ſays my lord? Did *Leonora* then
Never before diſcloſe her paſſion for you?

ALONZO.

Never.

ZANGA.

Throughout the whole three years!

ALONZO.

O never! never!—
Why, *Zanga*, ſhould'ſt thou ſtrive? 'Tis all in vain;
Tho' thy ſoul labours, it can find no reed
For hope to catch at. Ah! I'm plunging down
Ten thouſand thouſand fathoms in deſpair.

ZANGA.

Hold, Sir; I'll break your fall—Wave ev'ry fear,
And be a man again—Had he enjoy'd her,
Be moſt aſſur'd, he had reſign'd her to you
With leſs reluctance.

ALONZO.

Ha! reſign her to me!———
Reſign her!—Who reſign her?—Double death!
How could I doubt ſo long? My heart is broke:
Firſt love her to diſtraction! then reſign her!

ZANGA.

But was it not with utmoſt agony?

ALONZO.

Grant that, he ſtill reſign'd her; that's enough.
Would he pluck out his eye to give it me?

Tear

Tear out his heart?—She was his heart no more——
Nor was it with reluctance he reſign'd her.
By heav'n, he aſk'd, he courted, me to wed:
I thought it ſtrange; 'tis now no longer ſo.

ZANGA.

Was't his requeſt? Are you right ſure of that?
I fear the letter was not all a tale.

ALONZO.

A tale! There's proof equivalent to ſight.

ZANGA.

I ſhould diſtruſt my ſight on this occaſion.

ALONZO.

And ſo ſhould I; by heav'n, I think I ſhould.
What, *Leonora* the divine, by whom
We gueſs'd at angels? O! I'm all confuſion.

ZANGA.

You are now too much ruffled to think clearly.
Since bliſs and horror, life and death, hang on it,
Go to your chamber; there maturely weigh
Each circumſtance; conſider, above all,
That it is jealouſy's peculiar nature
To ſwell ſmall things to great; nay, out of nought
To conjure much; and then to loſe its reaſon
Amid the hideous phantoms it has form'd.

ALONZO.

Had I ten thouſand lives, I'd give them all
To be deceiv'd: I fear 'tis doomſday with me;
And yet ſhe ſeem'd ſo pure, that I thought heav'n
Borrow'd her form for virtue's ſelf to wear,
To gain her lovers with the ſons of men. [*Exit* Alon.

Enter ISABELLA.

ZANGA.

Thus far it works auſpiciouſly. My patient
Thrives, underneath my hand, in miſery:
He's gone to think; that is, to be diſtracted.

ISABELLA.

I overheard your conference, and ſaw you,
To my amazement tear the letter.

ZANGA.

There,
There, *Iſabella*, I out-did myſelf:
For tearing it, I not ſecure it only
In its firſt force, but ſuperadd a new:
For who can now the character examine
To cauſe a doubt, much leſs detect the fraud?
And, after tearing it, as loth to ſhew
The foul contents, if I ſhould ſwear it now
A forgery, my lord would diſbelieve me;
Nay, more would diſbelieve, the more I ſwore.
But is the picture happily diſpos'd of?

ISABELLA.

It is.

ZANGA.

That's well—Ah! what is well? O pang to think!
O dire neceſſity! Is this my province?
Whither, my ſoul, ah! whither art thou ſunk
Beneath thy ſphere? E'er while, far, far above
Such little arts, diſſemblings, falſhoods, frauds,
The traſh of villainy itſelf, which falls
To cowards, and poor wretches wanting bread:
Does this become a ſoldier? This become
Whom armies follow'd, and a people lov'd?

My

My martial glory withers at the thought:
But great my end; and ſince there are no other,
Theſe means are juſt; they ſhine with borrow'd light,
Illuſtrious from the purpoſe they purſue.
And greater ſure my merit, who, to gain
A point ſublime, can ſuch a taſk ſuſtain;
To wade thro' ways obſcene, my honour bend,
And ſhock my nature, to attain my end:
Late time ſhall wonder; that my joys will raiſe;
For wonder is involuntary praiſe.

ACT IV. SCENE I.

Enter ALONZO *and* ZANGA.

ALONZO.

O What a pain to think! when every thought,
Perplexing thought, in intricacies runs,
And reaſon knits th' inextricable toil,
In which herſelf is taken! I am loſt;
Poor inſect that I am, I am involv'd,
And bury'd in the web myſelf have wrought!
One argument is balanc'd by another,
And reaſon reaſon meets in doubtful fight,
And proofs are countermin'd by equal proofs.
No more I'll bear this battle of the mind,
This inward anarchy; but find my wife,
And, to her trembling heart preſenting death,
Force all the ſecret from her.

ZANGA.

O forbear!
You totter on the very brink of ruin.

ALONZO.

What doſt thou mean?

ZANGA. [*Aſide.*]

That will diſcover all,
And kill my hopes: What can I think or do?

ALONZO.

What! doſt thou murmur?

ZANGA.

Force the ſecret from her!
What's perjury to ſuch a crime as this?
Will ſhe confeſs it then? O groundleſs hope!
But reſt aſſur'd, ſhe'll make this accuſation,
Or falſe or true, your ruin with the king;
Such is her father's power.

ALONZO.

No more; I care not:
Rather than groan beneath this load, I'll die.

ZANGA.

But for what better will you change this load?
Grant you ſhould know it, would not that be worſe?

ALONZO.

No; it would cure me of my mortal pangs:
By hatred and contempt, I ſhould deſpiſe her;
And all my love-bred agonies would vaniſh.

ZANGA.

Ah! were I ſure of that, my lord———

ALONZO.

What then?

ZANGA.

You ſhould not hazard life to gain the ſecret.

ALON-

ALONZO.

What doſt thou mean? Thou know'ſt I'm on the rack:
I'll not be play'd with; ſpeak, if thou haſt aught,
Or I this inſtant fly to *Leonora*.

ZANGA.

That is to death. My lord, I am not yet
Quite ſo far gone in guilt to ſuffer it;
Tho' gone too far, heav'n knows—'Tis I am guilty—
I have took pains, as you I know obſerv'd,
To hinder you from diving in the ſecret,
And turn'd aſide your thoughts from the detection.

ALONZO.

Thou doſt confound me.

ZANGA.

I confound myſelf;
And frankly own, though to my ſhame I own it,
Nought but your life in danger could have torn
The ſecret out, and made me own my crime.

ALONZO.

Speak quickly; *Zanga*, ſpeak.

ZANGA.

Not yet, dread Sir:
Firſt I muſt be aſſur'd, that if you find
The fair one guilty, ſcorn, as you aſſur'd me,
Shall conquer love and rage, and heal your ſoul.

ALONZO.

O! 'twill, by heav'n.

ZANGA.

Alas! I fear it much,
And ſcarce can hope ſo far; but I of this
Exact your ſolemn oath, that you'll abſtain
From all ſelf-violence, and ſave my lord.

ALON-

ALONZO.

I trebly ſwear.

ZANGA.

You'll bear it like a man?

ALONZO.

A god.

ZANGA.

Such have you been to me; theſe tears confeſs it;
And pour'd forth miracles of kindneſs on me:
And what amends is now within my pow'r,
But to confeſs, expoſe myſelf to juſtice,
And, as a bleſſing, claim my puniſhment?
Know then, Don *Carlos*—

ALONZO.

Oh!

ZANGA.

You cannot bear it.

ALONZO.

Go on; I'll have it, tho' it blaſt mankind:
I'll have it all, and inſtantly.——————Go on.

ZANGA.

Don *Carlos* did return at dead of night——————

Enter LEONORA.

LEONORA.

My lord *Alonzo*, you are abſent from us,
And quite undo our joy.

ALONZO.

I'll come, my Love:
Be not our friends deſerted by us both;
I'll follow you this moment.

LEONORA.

My good lord,

I do obſerve ſeverity of thought
Upon your brow. Aught hear you from the *Moors?*

ALONZO.

No, my delight.

LEONORA.

What then employ'd your mind?

ALONZO.

Thou, love, and only thou; ſo heav'n befriend me,
As other thought can find no entrance here.

LEONORA.

How good in you, my lord, whom nations cares
Solicit, and a world in arms obeys,
To drop one thought on me!

ALONZO. [*He ſhews the utmoſt impatience.*]

Doſt thou then prize it?

LEONORA.

Do you then aſk it?

ALONZO.

Know then, to thy comfort,
Thou haſt me all; my throbbing heart is full
With thee alone; I've thought of nothing elſe;
Nor ſhall, I from my ſoul believe, 'till death.
My life, our friends expect thee.

LEONORA.

I obey. [*Ex.* Leon.

ALONZO.

Is that the face of curs'd hypocriſy?
If ſhe is guilty, ſtars are made of darkneſs,
And beauty ſhall no more belong to heav'n——
Don Carlos *did return at dead of night:*
Proceed, good *Zanga*; ſo thy tale began.

ZANGA.

Don *Carlos* did return at dead of night;

That

ALONZO.

I trebly ſwear.

ZANGA.

You'll bear it like a man?

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Nor ſhall, I from my ſoul believe, 'till death.
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If ſhe is guilty, ſtars are made of darkneſs,
And beauty ſhall no more belong to heav'n——
Don Carlos *did return at dead of night:*
Proceed, good *Zanga*; ſo thy tale began.

ZANGA.

Don *Carlos* did return at dead of night;

That

That night, by chance (ill chance for me) did I
Command the watch that guards the palace gate:
He told me he had letters for the king,
Diſpatch'd from you.

ALONZO.

The villain ly'd.

ZANGA.

My lord,
I pray forbear—Tranſported at his ſight,
After ſo long a bondage, and your friend,
(Who could ſuſpect him of an artifice?)
No farther I enquir'd; but let him paſs,
Falſe to my truſt; at leaſt imprudent in it.
Our watch reliev'd, I went into the garden,
As is my cuſtom when the night's ſerene,
And took a moon-light walk; when ſoon I heard
A ruſtling in an arbour that was near me:
I ſaw two lovers in each other's arms,
Embracing and embrac'd: Anon the man
Aroſe; and, falling back ſome paces from her,
Gaz'd ardently a while; then ruſh'd at once;
And throwing all himſelf into her boſom,
There ſoftly ſigh'd; "O night of ecſtaſy!
"When ſhall we meet again?"—Don *Carlos* then
Led *Leonora* forth.

ALONZO.

O! O my heart! [*He ſinks into a chair.*

ZANGA.

Groan on, and with the ſound refreſh my ſoul.
'Tis thro' his heart; his knees ſmite one another:
'Tis thro' his brain; his eye balls roll in anguiſh. [*Aſide.*
My lord, my lord, why will you rack my ſoul?

Speak

Speak to me; let me know that you ſtill live.
Do you not know me, Sir? Pray look upon me:
You think too deeply: I'm your own *Zanga*,
So lov'd, ſo cheriſh'd, and ſo faithful to you.——
Where ſtart you in ſuch fury? Nay, my lord,
For heav'n's ſake ſheath your ſword! What can this mean?
Fool that I was, to truſt you with a ſecret;
And you unkind, to break your word with me.
O paſſion for a woman! On the ground?
Where is your boaſted courage? Where your ſcorn,
And prudent rage, that was to cure your grief,
And chace your love-bred agonies away?
Riſe, Sir, for honour's ſake. Why ſhould the *Moors*,
Why ſhould the vanquiſh'd, triumph?

ALONZO.

Would to heaven,
That I were lower ſtill! O ſhe was All!
My fame, my friendſhip, and my love of arms,
All ſtoop'd to her; by blood was her poſſeſſion:
Deep in the ſecret foldings of my heart,
She liv'd with life, and far the dearer ſhe:
But—and no more—ſet nature in a blaze;
Give her a fit of jealouſy—away——
To think on't is the torment of the damn'd;
And not to think on't, is impoſſible.
How fair the cheek, that firſt alarm'd my ſoul!
How bright the eye, that ſets it on a flame!
How ſoft the breaſt, on which I laid my peace
For years to ſlumber, unawak'd by care!
How fierce the tranſport! how ſublime the bliſs!—
How deep, how black, the horror, and deſpair!

ZAN-

ZANGA.

You ſaid, you'd bear it like a man.

ALONZO.

I do.

Am I not moſt diſtracted?

ZANGA.

Pray be calm.

ALONZO.

As hurricanes: Be thou aſſur'd of that.

ZANGA.

Is this the wiſe *Alonzo?*

ALONZO.

Villain, no:

He dy'd in th' arbour; he was murder'd there:
I am his dæmon, tho'—my wife! my wife!—

ZANGA.

Alas! he weeps.

ALONZO.

Go, dig her grave.

ZANGA.

My lord!

ALONZO.

But that her blood's too hot, I would carouſe it
Around my bridal-board.

ZANGA. [*Aſide.*]

And I would pledge thee.

ALONZO.

But I may talk too faſt. Pray let me think,
And reaſon mildly.—Wedded and undone
Before one night deſcends—O haſty evil!
What friend to comfort me in this extreme!
Where's *Carlos?* Why is *Carlos* abſent from me?
Does he know what has happen'd?

ZAN-

ZANGA.

My good lord!

ALONZO.

O depth of horrors! He!—my boſom friend!

ZANGA.

Alas! compoſe yourſelf, my lord.

ALONZO.

To death.

Gaze on her with both eyes ſo ardently!
Give them the vulturs; tear them all in pieces!

ZANGA. [*Aſide.*]

Moſt excellent!

ALONZO.

Hark! you can keep a ſecret.
In yonder arbour bound with jeſſamin; (der!—
Who's that? What villain's that? Unhand her—Mur-
Tear them aſunder—Murder—How they grind
My heart betwixt them!—O let go my heart!
Yet let it go—*Embracing and embrac'd!*
O peſtilence!—Who let him in? A traitor.

(*Goes to ſtab* Zanga: *he prevents him.*

Alas! my head turns round, and my limbs fail me.

ZANGA.

My lord!

ALONZO.

O villain, villain, moſt accurſt!
If thou didſt know it, why didſt let me wed?

ZANGA.

Hear me, my lord; your anger will abate:
I knew it not; I ſaw them in the garden;
But ſaw no more than you might well expect
To ſee in lovers deſtin'd for each other:
By heav'n, I thought their meeting innocent.

Who

Who could ſuſpect fair *Leonora*'s virtue,
Till after-proofs conſpir'd to blacken it?
Sad proofs, which came too late; which broke not out
(Eternal curſes on *Alvarez* haſte!)
Till holy rites had made the wanton yours;
And then, I own, I labour'd to conceal it,
In duty, and compaſſion to your peace.

ALONZO.

Live now; be damn'd hereafter; for I want thee.
O night of ecſtaſy!—Ha! was't not ſo?
I will enjoy this murder—Let me think———
The jeſs'min bow'r; 'tis ſecret and remote:
Go, wait me there, and take thy dagger with thee.
[*Exit* Zanga.
How the ſweet ſound ſtill ſings within my ear!
When ſhall we meet again? To-night, in hell.
[*As he is going, Enter* Leonora.
Ha! I'm ſurpriz'd; I ſtagger at her charms.
O angel-devil!—Shall I ſtab her now?
No, it ſhall be as I had firſt determin'd:
To kill her now were half my vengeance loſt.
Then I muſt now diſſemble—if I can.

LEONORA.

My lord, excuſe me; ſee, a ſecond time
I come in embaſſy from all your friends,
Whoſe joys are languid, uninſpir'd by you.

ALONZO.

This moment, *Leonora*, I was coming
To thee, and all—But ſure, or I miſtake,
Or thou canſt well inſpire my friends with joy.

LEONORA.

Why ſighs my lord?

ALON-

ALONZO.

I ſigh'd not, *Leonora.*

LEONORA.

I thought you did: Your ſighs are mine, my lord,
And I ſhall feel them all.

ALONZO.

Doſt flatter me?

LEONORA.

If my regards for you are flattery,
Full far indeed I ſtretch'd the compliment
In this day's ſolemn rite.

ALONZO.

What rite?

LEONORA.

You ſport me.

ALONZO.

Indeed I do; my heart is full of mirth.

LEONORA.

And ſo is mine——I look on chearfulneſs,
As on the health of virtue.

ALONZO.

Virtue!———Damn——

LEONORA.

What ſays my lord?

ALONZO.

Thou art exceeding fair.

LEONORA.

Beauty alone is but of little worth;
But when the ſoul and body of a piece,
Both ſhine alike; then they obtain a price,
And are a fit reward for gallant actions,
Heav'n's pay on earth for ſuch great ſouls as yours:
If fair and innocent, I am your due.

ALON-

ALONZO. [*Aſide.*]

Innocent!

LEONORA.

How!—My lord, I interrupt you.

ALONZO.

No, my beſt life; I muſt not part with thee:
This hand is mine. O! what a hand is here?
So ſoft, ſouls ſink into it, and are loſt!

LEONORA.

In tears, my lord?

ALONZO.

What leſs can ſpeak my joy?
I gaze, and I forgot my own exiſtence;
'Tis all a viſion; my head ſwims in heav'n.
Wherefore, O! wherefore, this expence of beauty?
And wherefore? O!———
Why, I could gaze upon thy looks for ever,
And drink in all my being from thine eyes;
And I could ſnatch a flaming thunderbolt,
And hurl deſtruction.—

LEONORA.

How, my lord! What mean you?
Acquaint me with the ſecret of your heart,
Or caſt me out for ever from your love.

ALONZO.

Art thou concern'd for me?

LEONORA.

My lord, you fright me.
Is this the fondneſs of your nuptial hour?
I am ill-us'd, my lord; I muſt not bear it.
Why, when I woo your hand, is it deny'd me?
Your very eyes, why are they taught to ſhun me?
Nay, my good lord, I have a title here; [*Taking his hand.*

And

And I will have it. Am I not your wife?
Have I not juſt authority to know
That heart, which I have purchas'd with my own?
Lay it before me then; it is my due.
Unkind *Alonzo*, tho' I might demand it,
Behold, I kneel! See, *Leonora* kneels,
And deigns to be a beggar for her own!
Tell me the ſecret; I conjure you tell me.
The bride foregoes the homage of her day;
Alvarez' daughter trembles in the duſt:
Speak then; I charge you ſpeak, or I expire,
And load you with my death. My lord—my lord!

ALONZO.

Ha! ha! ha! *He breaks from her, and ſhe ſinks upon the floor.*

LEONORA.

Are theſe the joys which fondly I conceiv'd?
And is it thus a wedded life begins?
What did I part with, when I gave my heart?
I knew not that all happineſs went with it.
Why did I leave my tender father's wing,
And venture into love? The maid that loves,
Goes out to ſea upon a ſhatter'd plank,
And puts her truſt in miracles for ſafety.
Where ſhall I ſigh? Where pour out my complaint?
He that ſhould hear, ſhould ſuccour, ſhould redreſs,
He, is the ſource of all.

ALONZO.

Go to thy chamber;
I ſoon will follow: That which now diſturbs thee,
Shall be clear'd up, and thou ſhalt not condemn me.

[*Exit* Leonora.

O,

O, how like innocence ſhe looks! What, ſtab her,
And ruſh her into blood?—I never can:
In her, guilt ſhines, and nature holds my hand.
How then? Why thus—No more; it is determin'd.

Enter ZANGA.

ZANGA. [*Aſide.*]

I fear his heart has fail'd him. She muſt die.
Can I not rouze the ſnake that's in his boſom,
To ſting out human nature, and effect it?

ALONZO.

This vaſt and ſolid earth, that blazing ſun,
Thoſe ſkies, thro' which it rolls, muſt all have end.
What then is man? The ſmalleſt part of nothing.
Day buries day; month, month; and year the year:
Our life is but a chain of many deaths.
Can then death's ſelf be fear'd? Our life much rather:
Life is the deſart, life the ſolitude;
Death joins us to the great majority:
'Tis to be born to *Plato*'s and to *Cæſar*;
'Tis to be great for ever;
'Tis pleaſure, 'tis ambition, then, to die.

ZANGA.

I think, my lord, you talk'd of death.

ALONZO.

I did.

ZANGA.

I give you joy; then *Leonora*'s dead.

ALONZO.

No, *Zanga*, no; the greateſt guilt is mine:
'Tis mine, who might have mark'd his midnight viſit;
Who might have mark'd his tameneſs to reſign her;
Who might have mark'd her ſudden turn of love:
Theſe,

Theſe, and a thouſand tokens more; and yet
(For which the ſaints abſolve my ſoul!) did wed.

ZANGA.

Where does this tend?

ALONZO.

To ſhed a woman's blood
Would ſtain my ſword, and make my wars inglorious;
But juſt reſentment to myſelf, bears in it
A ſtamp of greatneſs above vulgar minds:
He who, ſuperior to the checks of nature,
Dares make his life the victim of his reaſon,
Does in ſome ſort that reaſon deify,
And take a flight at heav'n.

ZANGA.

Alas! my lord,
'Tis not your reaſon, but her beauty, finds
Thoſe arguments, and throws you on your ſword:
You cannot cloſe an eye that is ſo bright;
You cannot ſtrike a breaſt that is ſo ſoft;
That has ten thouſand ecſtaſies in ſtore—
For *Carlos?*—No, my lord; I mean for you.

ALONZO.

O! Thro' my heart and marrow! Pr'ythee ſpare me;
Nor more upbraid the weakneſs of thy lord:
I own, I try'd, I quarrell'd, with my heart,
And puſh'd it on, and bid it give her death;
But, O! her eyes ſtruck firſt, and murder'd me.

ZANGA.

I know not what to anſwer to my lord.
Men are but men; we did not make ourſelves:
Farewel then, my beſt lord, ſince you muſt die.
O that I were to ſhare your monument,

And

And in eternal darkneſs cloſe theſe eyes
Againſt thoſe ſcenes which I am doom'd to ſuffer!

ALONZO.

What doſt thou mean?

ZANGA.

And is it then unknown?
O grief of heart, to think that you ſhould aſk it!
Sure you diſtruſt that ardent love I bear you,
Elſe could you doubt when you are laid in duſt?——
But it will cut my poor heart thro' and thro'
To ſee thoſe revel on your ſacred tomb,
Who brought you thither by their lawleſs loves:
For there they'll revel, and exult to find
Him ſleep ſo faſt, who elſe would marr their joys.

ALONZO.

Diſtraction!—But Don *Carlos*, well thou know'ſt,
Is ſheath'd in ſteel, and bent on other thoughts.

ZANGA.

I'll work him to the murder of his friend— [*Aſide.*
Yes, 'till the fever of his blood returns,
While her laſt kiſs ſtill glows upon his cheek.
But when he finds *Alonzo* is no more,
How will he ruſh, like lightning, to her arms!
There ſigh, there languiſh, there pour out his ſoul;
But not in grief—ſad obſequies to thee——
But thou wilt be at peace, nor ſee, nor hear,
The burning kiſs, the ſigh of ecſtaſy,
Their throbbing hearts that joſtle one another:
Thank heav'n, theſe torments will be all my own.

ALONZO.

I'll eaſe thee of that pain: Let *Carlos* die;

O'er-

O'ertake him on the road, and ſee it done.
'Tis my command. [*Gives his ſignet.*

ZANGA.

I dare not diſobey.

ALONZO.

My *Zanga*, now I have thy leave to die.

ZANGA.

Ah, Sir, think, think again. Are all men buried
In *Carlos*' grave? You know not womankind:
When once the throbbing of the heart has broke
The modeſt zone, with which it firſt was ty'd,
Each man ſhe meets will be a *Carlos* to her.

ALONZO.

That thought has more of hell than had the former;
Another, and another, and another!
And each ſhall caſt a ſmile upon my tomb!
I am convinc'd; I muſt not, will not, die.

ZANGA.

You cannot die; nor can you murder her.
What then remains? In nature no third way,
But to forget, and ſo to love again.

ALONZO.

Oh!

ZANGA.

If you forgive, the world will call you *Good*;
If you forget, the world will call you *Wife*;
If you receive her to your grace again,
The world will call you, *very, very kind.*

ALONZO.

Zanga, I underſtand thee well. She dies;
Tho' my arm tremble at the ſtroke, ſhe dies.

ZANGA.

That's truly great. What think you 'twas ſet up

The *Greek* and *Roman* name in ſuch a luſtre,
But doing right in ſtern deſpite to nature,
Shutting their ears to all her little cries,
When great, auguſt, and god-like juſtice call'd?
At *Aulis*, one pour'd out a daughter's life,
And gain'd more glory than by all his wars;
Another ſlew a ſiſter in juſt rage;
A third, the theme of all ſucceeding times,
Gave to the cruel ax a darling ſon:
Nay more, for juſtice ſome devote themſelves,
As he at *Carthage*, an immortal name!
Yet there is one ſtep left above 'em all,
Above their hiſtory, above their fable,
A wife, bride, miſtreſs, unenjoy'd—Do That
And tread upon the *Greek* and *Roman* glory.

ALONZO.

Tis done—again new tranſports fire my brain;
I had forgot it; 'tis my bridal night:
Friend, give me joy; we muſt be gay together:
See that the feſtival be duly honour'd.
And when with garlands the full bowl is crown'd,
And muſic gives her elevating ſound,
And golden carpets ſpread the ſacred floor,
And a new day the blazing tapers pour,
Thou, *Zanga*, then my ſolemn friends invite,
From the dark realms of everlaſting night;
Call vengeance, call the furies, call deſpair;
And death, our chief invited gueſt, be there;
He, with pale hand, ſhall lead the bride, and ſpread
Eternal curtains round our nuptial-bed. [*Exeunt.*

ACT

ACT V. SCENE I.

Enter ALONZO.

ALONZO.

O Pityful! O terrible to ſight!
Poor mangled ſhade, all cover'd o'er with wounds,
And ſo diſguis'd with blood! Who murder'd thee?
Tell thy ſad tale, and thou ſhalt be reveng'd.
Ha! *Carlos?*—Horror! *Carlos?*—O, away!
Go to thy grave, or let me ſink to mine.
I cannot bear the ſight—What ſight?—Where am I?
There's nothing here——If this was fancy's work,
She draws a picture ſtrongly.——————

Enter ZANGA.

ZANGA.

Ha!—You're pale.

ALONZO.

Is *Carlos* murder'd?

ZANGA.

I obey'd your order.
Six ruffians overtook him on the road;
He fought as he was wont, and four he ſlew;
Then ſunk beneath an hundred wounds to death:
His laſt breath bleſt *Alonzo*, and deſir'd
His bones might reſt near yours.

ALONZO.

O *Zanga! Zanga!*—

But I'll not think; for I muſt act; and thinking
Would ruin me for action. O the medley
Of right and wrong! the chaos in my brain!
He ſhould, and ſhould not die—You ſhould obey,
And not obey——It is a day of darkneſs,
Of contradictions, and of many deaths.
Where's *Leonora* then? Quick anſwer me;
I'm deep in horrors; I'll be deeper ſtill.——
I find, thy artifice did take effect,
And ſhe forgives my late deportment to her.

ZANGA.

I told her, from your childhood you were wont,
On any great ſurprize, but chiefly then,
When cauſe of ſorrow bore it company,
To have your paſſion ſhake the ſeat of reaſon;
A momentary ill, which ſoon blew o'er:
Then did I tell her of Don *Carlos*' death;
(Wiſely ſuppreſſing by what means he fell)
And laid the blame on that. At firſt ſhe doubted;
But ſuch the honeſt artifice I us'd,
And ſuch her ardent wiſh it ſhould be true,
That ſhe, at length, was fully ſatisfy'd.

ALONZO.

'Twas well ſhe was. In our late interview,
My paſſion ſo far threw me from my guard,
(Methinks 'tis ſtrange!) that, conſcious of her guilt,
She ſaw not, thro' its thin diſguiſe, my heart.

ZANGA.

But what deſign you, Sir; and how?

ALONZO.

I'll tell thee.
Thus I've ordain'd it: In the jeſs'min bow'r,

The

The place which ſhe diſhonour'd with her guilt,
There will I meet her; the appointment's made;
And calmly ſpread (for I can do it now)
The blackneſs of her crime before her ſight;
And then, with all the cool ſolemnity
Of public juſtice, give her to the grave. [*Exit.*

ZANGA.

Why, get thee gone! Horror and night go with thee!
Siſters of *Acheron*, go hand in hand;
Go dance around the bow'r, and cloſe them in;
And tell them, that I ſent you to ſalute them!
Prophane the ground; and for th' ambroſial roſe,
And breath of jeſs'min, let hemlock blacken,
And deadly nightſhade poiſon all the air!
For the ſweet nightingale, may ravens croak,
Toads pant, and adders ruſtle thro' the leaves;
May ſerpents, winding up the trees, let fall
Their hiſſing necks upon them from above,
And mingle kiſſes—ſuch as I ſhould give them! [*Exit.*

SCENE, *The Bower.*

LEONORA *ſleeping* *Enter* ALONZO.

ALONZO.

YE amaranths! ye roſes, like the morn!
Sweet myrtles, and ye golden orange-groves!
Why do you ſmile? Why do you look ſo fair?
Are you not blaſted as I enter in?
Yes; ſee how every flow'r lets fall its head!
How ſhudders every leaf without a wind!
How every green is as the ivy pale!
Did ever midnight ghoſts aſſemble here?

Have theſe ſweet echoes ever learnt to groan?
Joy-giving, love-inſpiring, holy bow'r!
Know, in thy fragrant boſom, thou receiv'ſt
A—murderer: O! I ſhall ſtain thy lilies,
And horror will uſurp the ſeat of bliſs.
So *Lucifer* broke into Paradiſe, [ſleeps——
And ſoon damnation follow'd. [*He advances.*] Ha! ſhe
The day's uncommon heat has overcome her:
Then take, my longing eyes, your laſt full gaze.
O, what a ſight is here! How dreadful fair!
Who would not think that Being innocent?
Where ſhall I ſtrike? Who ſtrikes her, ſtrikes himſelf.
My own life-blood will iſſue at her wound.
O my diſtracted heart!—O cruel heav'n!
To give ſuch charms as thoſe, and then call man,
Meer man, to be your executioner.
Was it becauſe it was too hard for you?
But ſee, ſhe ſmiles! I never ſhall ſmile more:
It ſtrongly tempts me to a parting kiſs.
[*Going, ſhe ſtarts back.*
Ha! ſmile again! She dreams of him ſhe loves:
Curſe on her charms! I'll ſtab her thro' them all.
[*As he is going to ſtrike, ſhe wakes.*

LEONORA.

My lord, your ſtay was long; and yonder lull
Of falling waters tempted me to reſt,
Diſpirited with noon's exceſſive heat.

ALONZO.

Ye pow'rs! with what an eye ſhe mends the day!
While they were clos'd, I ſhould have giv'n the blow.
[*Aſide.*

O for a laſt embrace! and then for juſtice:
Thus heav'n and I ſhall both be ſatisfy'd.

LEONORA.

What ſays my lord?

ALONZO.

Why This *Alonzo* ſays:
If love were endleſs, men were gods; 'tis that
Does counter-balance travel, danger, pain———
'Tis heav'n's expedient to make mortals bear
The light, and cheat them of the peaceful grave.

LEONORA.

Alas! my lord, why talk you of the grave?
Your friend is dead; in friendſhip you ſuſtain
A mighty loſs; repair it with my love.

ALONZO.

Thy love? Thou piece of witchcraft!—I wou'd ſay,
Thou brighteſt angel! I could gaze for ever.
Where hadſt thou this? Enchantreſs, tell me where?
Which with a touch works miracles, boils up
My blood to tumults, and turns round my brain!
Ev'n now thou ſwim'ſt before me: I ſhall loſe thee:
No, I will make thee ſure, and claſp thee all.
Who turn'd this ſlender waſte with ſo much art,
And ſhut perfection in ſo ſmall a ring?
Who ſpread that pure expanſe of white above,
On which the dazled ſight can find no reſt;
But, drunk with beauty, wanders up and down
For ever, and for ever finds new charms?
But, O thoſe eyes! thoſe murderers! O whence,
Whence didſt thou ſteal their burning orbs? From
Thou didſt; and 'tis religion to adore them. [heav'n

LEONORA.

My beſt *Alonzo*, moderate your thought;
Extremes ſtill fright me, tho' of love itſelf.

ALONZO.

Extremes indeed! It hurried me away;
But I come home again—and now for juſtice——
And now for death—It is impoſſible——
Sure ſuch were made by heav'n guiltleſs to ſin,
Or in their guilt to laugh at puniſhment. *Aſide.*
I leave her to juſt heav'n. [*Drops the dagger, and goes off.*

LEONORA.

Ha! a dagger!
What doſt thou ſay, thou miniſter of death?
What dreadful tale doſt tell me? Let me think.

Enter ZANGA.

ZANGA. [*Aſide.*]

Death to my tow'ring hope! O fall from high!
My cloſe long-labour'd ſcheme at once is blaſted.
That dagger found will cauſe her to enquire;
Enquiry will diſcover all; my hopes
Of vengeance periſh; I myſelf am loſt——
Curſe on the coward's heart! wither his hand,
Which held the ſteel in vain!—What can be done?—
Where can I fix?—That's ſomething ſtill—'twill breed
Fell rage and bitterneſs betwixt their ſouls,
Which may perchance grow up to greater evil;
If not, 'tis all I can——It ſhall be ſo——

LEONORA.

O *Zanga!* I am ſinking in my fears!
Alonzo dropt this dagger as he left me;
And left me in a ſtrange diſorder too.
What can this mean? Angels preſerve his life!

ZAN-

ZANGA.

Yours, Madam; yours.

LEONORA.

What, *Zanga*, doſt thou ſay?

ZANGA.

Carry your goodneſs then to ſuch extremes,
So blinded to the faults of him you love,
That you perceive not he is jealous?

LEONORA.

Heav'ns!
And yet a thouſand things recur that ſwear it.
What villain could inſpire him with that thought?
It is not of the growth of his own nature.

ZANGA.

Some villain; who, hell knows; but he is jealous;
And 'tis moſt fit a heart ſo pure as yours
Do itſelf juſtice, and aſſert its honour,
And make him conſcious of his ſtab to virtue.

LEONORA.

Jealous! it ſickens at my heart. Unkind,
Ungenerous, groundleſs, weak, and inſolent!
Why? Wherefore? On what ſhadow of occaſion?
'Tis faſcination; 'tis the wrath of heav'n
For the collected crimes of all his race.
O how the great man leſſens to my thought!
How could ſo mean a vice as jealouſy,
Unnatural child of ignorance and guilt,
Which tears and feeds upon it's parent's heart,
Live in a throng of ſuch exalted virtues?
I ſcorn and hate—yet love him, and adore:
I cannot, will not, dare not, think it true,
Till from himſelf I know it. [*Exit.*

ZANGA.

This ſucceeds
Juſt to my wiſh. Now ſhe with violence
Upbraids him; he, not doubting ſhe is guilty,
Rages no leſs; and if on either ſide
The waves run high, there ſtill lives hope of ruin.
[*Enter* Alonzo.
My lord.——

ALONZO.

O *Zanga!* hold thy peace; I am no coward;
But heav'n itſelf did hold my hand; I felt it;
By the well-being of my ſoul, I did:
I'll think of vengeance at another ſeaſon.

ZANGA.

My lord, her guilt——

ALONZO.

Perdition on thee, *Moor*,
For that one word! Ah! do not rouze that thought;
I have o'erwhelm'd it much as poſſible:
Away then; let us talk of other things:
I tell thee, *Moor*, I love her to diſtraction:
If 'tis my ſhame, why be it ſo——I love her;
Nor can I help it; 'tis impos'd upon me
By ſome ſuperior and reſiſtleſs pow'r:
I could not hurt her to be lord of earth;
It ſhocks my nature like a ſtroke at heav'n.
Angels defend her, as if innocent!
But ſee, my *Leonora* comes:——Be gone. [*Ex.* Zanga.
[*Enter* Leonora.
O ſeen for ever! yet for ever new!
The conquer'd thou doſt conquer o'er again,
Inflicting wound on wound.

LEO-

LEONORA.

Alas, my lord!
What need of this to me?

ALONZO.

Ha! doſt thou weep?

LEONORA.

Have I no cauſe?

ALONZO.

If love is thy concern,
Thou haſt no cauſe; none ever lov'd like me.
But wherefore this? Is it to break my heart,
Which loſes ſo much blood for every tear?

LEONORA.

Is it ſo tender?

ALONZO.

Is it not? O heav'n!
Doubt of my love? Why, I am nothing elſe!
It quite abſorbs my every other paſſion.
O that this one embrace would laſt for ever!

LEONORA.

Could this man ever mean to wrong my virtue?
Could this man e'er deſign upon my life?
Impoſſible! I throw away the thought. [*Aſide.*
Theſe tears declare how much I taſte the joy
Of being folded in your arms and heart;
My univerſe does lie within that ſpace.
This dagger bore falſe witneſs. [*Showing it.*

ALONZO.

Ha! my dagger?
It rouzes horrid images: Away,
Away with it, and let us talk of Love,
Plunge ourſelves deep into the ſweet illuſion,
And hide us there from every other thought.

LE-

LEONORA.

It touches you.

ALONZO.

Let's talk of Love.

LEONORA.

Of Death.

ALONZO.

As thou lov'ſt happineſs———

LEONORA.

Of Murder.

ALONZO.

Raſh,
Raſh woman, yet forbear.

LEONORA.

Approve my wrongs!

ALONZO.

Then muſt I fly, for thy ſake and my own.

LEONORA.

Nay, by my injuries, you firſt muſt hear me:
Stab me, then think it much to hear me groan.

ALONZO.

Heav'ns, ſtrike me deaf!

LEONORA.

It well may ſting you home.

ALONZO.

Alas! thou quite miſtak'ſt my cauſe of pain.
Yet, yet diſmiſs me; I am all in flames.

LEONORA.

Who has moſt cauſe? You, or myſelf? What act
Of my whole life encourag'd you to this?
Or of your own, what guilt has drawn it on you?
You find me kind, and think me kind to all;
The weak, ungenerous error of your ſex.
What could inſpire the thought? We oft'neſt judge
From

From our own hearts; and is your's then ſo frail,
It prompts you to conceive thus ill of me?
He that can ſtoop to harbour ſuch a thought,
Deſerves to find it true. [*Holding him.*

ALONZO.

O ſex, ſex, ſex! [*Turning on her.*
The language of you all. Ill-fated woman!
Why haſt thou forc'd me back into the gulph
Of agonies, I had block'd up from thought?
I know the cauſe; thou ſaw'ſt me impotent
E'er while to hurt thee; therefore thou turn'ſt on me;
But, by the pangs I ſuffer, to thy woe:
For, ſince thou haſt replung'd me in my torture,
I will be ſatisfy'd!

LEONORA.

Be ſatisfy'd!

ALONZO.

Yes; thy own mouth ſhall witneſs it againſt thee:
I will be ſatisfy'd.

LEONORA.

Of what?

ALONZO.

Of what?
How dar'ſt thou aſk that queſtion? Woman, Woman,
Weak, and aſſur'd at once; thus 'tis for ever.
Who told thee that thy virtue was ſuſpected?
Who told thee I deſign'd upon thy life?
You found the dagger; but that could not ſpeak;
Nor did I tell thee: Who did tell thee then?
Guilt, conſcious guilt.

LEONORA.

This to my face? O heav'n!

ALON-

ALONZO.

This to thy very ſoul.

LEONORA.

Thou'rt not in earneſt?

ALONZO.

Serious as death.

LEONORA.

Then heav'n have mercy on thee.
Till now, I ſtruggled not to think it true;
I ſought conviction, and would not believe it:
And doſt thou force me? This ſhall not be borne:
Thou ſhalt repent this inſult. [*Going.*

ALONZO.

Madam, ſtay:
Your paſſion's wiſe; 'tis a diſguiſe for guilt:
'Tis my turn now to fix you here awhile;
You, and your thouſand arts, ſhall not eſcape me.

LEONORA.

Arts?

ALONZO.

Arts! Confeſs; for death is in my hand.

LEONORA.

'Tis in your words.

ALONZO.

Confeſs, confeſs, confeſs;
Nor tear my veins with paſſion to compel thee.

LEONORA.

I ſcorn to anſwer thee, preſumptuous man!

ALONZO.

Deny then, and incur a fouler ſhame.
Where did I find this picture?

LEONORA.

Ha! Don *Carlos?*
By my beſt hopes, more welcome than thy own.

ALON-

ALONZO.

I know it; but is vice ſo very rank,
That thou ſhould'ſt dare to daſh it in my face?
Nature is ſick of thee, abandon'd woman!

LEONORA.

Repent.

ALONZO.

Is that for me?

LEONORA.

Fall, aſk my pardon.

ALONZO.

Aſtoniſhment!

LEONORA.

Dar'ſt thou perſiſt to think I am diſhoneſt?

ALONZO.

I know thee ſo.

LEONORA.

This blow then to thy heart——

[*She ſtabs herſelf, he endeavouring to prevent her.*

ALONZO.

Ho! *Zanga! Iſabella!* Ho! ſhe bleeds!
Deſcend, ye bleſſed angels, to aſſiſt her!

LEONORA.

This is the only way I would wound thee,
Tho' moſt unjuſt. Now think me guilty ſtill.

Enter ISABELLA.

ALONZO.

Bear her to inſtant help: The world to ſave her!

LEONORA.

Unhappy man! well may'ſt thou gaze and tremble;
But fix thy terror and amazement right;
Not on my blood, but on thy own diſtraction.
What haſt thou done? Whom cenſur'd? *Leonora.*

When

When thou hadſt cenſur'd, thou would'ſt ſave her life;
O inconſiſtent! Should I live in ſhame,
Or ſtoop to any other means but this,
T' aſſert my virtue? No; ſhe who diſputes,
Admits it poſſible ſhe might be guilty:
While aught but truth could be my inducement to it,
While it might look like an excuſe to thee,
I ſcorn'd to vindicate my innocence;
But now, I let thy raſhneſs know, the wound
Which leaſt I feel, is that my dagger made.

[Iſabella *leads out* Leonora.

ALONZO.

Ha! Was this woman guilty?—and if not———
How my thought darkens that way! Grant, kind hea-
That ſhe prove guilty, or give Being end. (ven,
Is that my hope then?—Sure, the ſacred duſt
Of her that bore me trembles in its urn.
Is it in man the ſore diſtreſs to bear,
When hope itſelf is blacken'd to deſpair?
When all the bliſs I pant for, is to gain
In hell a refuge from ſeverer pain? [*Exit* Alon.

Enter ZANGA.

ZANGA.

How ſtands the great account 'twixt me and vengeance?
Tho' much is paid, yet ſtill it owes me much;
And I will not abate a ſingle groan.———
Ha! that were well—but that were fatal too——
Why be it ſo—Revenge ſo truly great
Would come too cheap, if bought with leſs than life.
Come, death, come, hell, then; 'tis reſolv'd; 'tis done.

Enter

Enter ISABELLA.

ISABELLA.

Ah! *Zanga*, ſee me tremble: Has not yet
Thy cruel heart its fill?—Poor *Leonora*—

ZANGA.

Welters in blood, and gaſps for her laſt breath:
What then? We all muſt die.

ISABELLA.

Alonzo raves;
And in the tempeſt of his grief, has thrice
Attempted on his life: At length, diſarm'd,
He calls his friends that ſave him, his worſt foes,
And importunes the ſkies for ſwift perdition.
Thus in his ſtorm of ſorrow. After pauſe,
He ſtarted up, and call'd aloud for *Zanga*;
For *Zanga* rav'd; and, ſee, he ſeeks you here,
To learn that truth, which moſt he dreads to know.

ZANGA.

Be gone. now, now, my ſoul, conſummate all.

[*Exit* Iſabella.

Enter ALONZO.

ALONZO.

O *Zanga!*

ZANGA.

Do not tremble ſo; but ſpeak.

ALONZO.

I dare not. [*Falls on him.*

ZANGA.

You will drown me with your tears.

ALONZO.

Have I not cauſe?

ZANGA.

As yet, you have no cauſe.

ALON-

ALONZO.

Doſt thou too rave?

ZANGA.

Your anguiſh is to come:
You much have been abus'd.

ALONZO.

Abus'd! By whom?

ZANGA.

To know, were little comfort.

ALONZO.

O! 'twere much.

ZANGA.

Indeed!

ALONZO.

By heav'n. O give him to my fury!

ZANGA.

Born for your uſe, I live but to oblige you:
Know then, 'twas————I.

ALONZO.

Am I awake?

ZANGA.

For ever.
Thy wife is guiltleſs; that's one tranſport to me;
And I, I let thee know it; that's another:
I urg'd Don *Carlos* to reſign his miſtreſs;
I forg'd the Letter; I diſpos'd the Picture;
I hated; I deſpis'd; and I deſtroy.

ALONZO.

Oh! [*Swoons.*

ZANGA.

Why, this is well—why, this is blow for blow.
Where are you? Crown me, ſhadow me, with laurels,
Ye ſpirits, which delight in juſt Revenge:
Let *Europe*, and her pallid ſons, go weep;

Let

Let *Africk*, and her hundred thrones, rejoice.
O my dear countrymen! look down, and ſee
How I beſtride your proſtrate conqueror!
I tread on haughty *Spain*, and all her kings:
But this is mercy; this is my indulgence;
'Tis peace; 'tis refuge, from my indignation:
I muſt awake him into horrors. Ho!
Alonzo, ho, the *Moor* is at the gate;
Awake, Invincible, Omnipotent!
Thou who doſt all ſubdue.

ALONZO.

Inhuman ſlave!

ZANGA.

Fall'n Chriſtian, thou miſtak'ſt my character.
Look on me. Who am I? I know, thou ſay'ſt
The *Moor*, a ſlave, an abject, *beaten* ſlave
(Eternal woes to him that made me ſo!):
But look again. Has ſix years cruel bondage
Extinguiſh'd majeſty ſo far, that nought
Shines here, to give an awe of one above thee?
When the great *Mooriſh* king, *Abdella*, fell,
Fell by thy hand accurs'd, I fought faſt by him;
His ſon, tho', thro' his fondneſs, in diſguiſe,
Leſs to expoſe me to th' ambitious foe.
Ha! Does it wake thee? O'er my father's corſe
I ſtood aſtride, till I had clove thy creſt;
And then was made the captive of a ſquadron,
And ſunk into thy ſervant—But O! What,
What were my wages? Hear not, heav'n, nor earth!
My wages were a *blow*;—by heav'n, a *blow*;
And from a mortal hand,

ALON-

ALONZO.

O villain! villain!

ZANGA. [*Shewing a dagger.*]

All ſtrife is vain.

ALONZO.

Is thus my love return'd?
Is this my recompence? Make friends of tigers!
Lay not your young, O mothers, on the breaſt,
For fear they turn to ſerpents as they lie,
And pay you for their nouriſhment with death.
Carlos is dead, and *Leonora* dying;
Both innocent, both murder'd, both by me:
That heav'nly maid, which ſhould have liv'd for ever!
At leaſt have gently ſlept her ſoul away;
Whoſe life ſhould have ſhut up as evening flow'rs
At the departing ſun——was murder'd! murder'd!
O ſhame! O guilt! O horror! O remorſe!
O puniſhment! Had Satan never fell,
Hell had been made for me—O *Leonora!*

ZANGA.

Muſt I deſpiſe thee too, as well as hate thee?
Complain of grief, complain thou art a man.
Priam from fortune's lofty ſummit fell;
Great *Alexander* 'midſt his conqueſts mourn'd;
Heroes and demi-gods have known their ſorrows;
Cæſars have wept; and I have had——my *blow*:
But 'tis reveng'd; and now my work is done:
Yet, ere I fall, be it one part of vengeance,
To make ev'n *thee* confeſs that I am juſt:
Thou ſeeſt a prince, whoſe father thou haſt ſlain;
Whoſe native country thou haſt laid in blood;
Whoſe ſacred perſon, oh! thou haſt prophan'd;

Whoſe

Whoſe reign extinguiſh'd: What was left to me
So highly born? No kingdom, but Revenge;
No treaſure, but thy tortures, and thy groans.
If men ſhould aſk who brought thee to thy end,
Tell them the *Moor*, and they will not deſpiſe thee:
If cold white mortals cenſure this great deed,
Warn them, they judge not of ſuperior beings,
Souls made of fire, and children of the ſun,
With whom Revenge is virtue. Fare thee well——
Now, fully ſatisfy'd, I ſhould take leave;
But one thing grieves me; ſince thy death is near,
I leave thee my example how to die.

As he is going to ſtab himſelf, Alonzo *ruſhes upon him to prevent him. In the mean time, Enter* Alvarez, *attended. They diſarm and ſeize* Zanga. Alonzo *puts the dagger in his boſom.*

ALONZO.

No, monſter, thou ſhalt not eſcape by death.
O father!

ALVAREZ.

O *Alonzo!* ——*Iſabella*,
Touch'd with remorſe to ſee her miſtreſs' pangs,
Told all the dreadful tale.

ALONZO.

What groan was that?

ZANGA.

As I have been a vultur to thy heart,
So will I be a raven to thine ear,
And true as ever ſnuff'd the ſcent of blood,
As ever flapt its heavy wing againſt
The window of the ſick, and croak'd deſpair:
Thy wife is dead.

[Alvarez *goes to the ſide of the ſtage, and returns.*

AL-

ALVAREZ.

The dreadful news is true.

ALONZO.

Prepare the rack; invent new torments for him.

ZANGA.

This too is well. The fix'd and noble mind
Turns all occurrence to its own advantage,
And I'll make vengeance of calamity.
Were I not thus reduc'd, thou would'ſt not know,
That, thus reduc'd, I dare defy thee ſtill:
Torture thou may'ſt; but thou ſhalt ne'er deſpiſe me:
The blood will follow, where the knife is driven;
The fleſh will quiver, where the pincers tear;
And ſighs and cries by nature grow on pain:
But theſe are foreign to the ſoul: Not mine
The groans that iſſue, or the tears that fall;
They diſobey me; on the rack I ſcorn thee,
As when my fauchion clove thy helm in battle.

ALVAREZ.

Peace, villain!

ZANGA.

While I live, old man, I'll ſpeak;
And, well I know, thou dar'ſt not kill me yet;
For that would rob thy blood-hounds of their prey.

ALONZO.

Who call'd *Alonzo?*

ALVAREZ.

No one call'd, my ſon.

ALONZO.

Again!—'tis *Carlos'* voice, and I obey. *(dagger.*
O how I laugh at all that this can do! [*Shewing the*
The wounds that pain'd, the wounds that murder'd me,
Were giv'n before; I am already dead;

This

This only marks my body for the grave. [*Stabs himſelf.*
Africk, thou art reveng'd——O *Leonora!*— [*Dies.*

ZANGA.

Good ruffians, give me leave my blood is yours;
The wheel's prepar'd, and you ſhall have it all;
Let me but look one moment on the dead,
And pay yourſelves with gazing on my pangs.
[*He goes to* Alonzo's *body.*
Is this *Alonzo?* Where's the haughty mien?
Is that the hand which ſmote me? Heav'ns, how pale!
And art thou dead? So is my enmity:
I war not with the duſt: The great, the proud,
The conqueror of *Africk*, was my foe.
A lion preys not upon carcaſſes.
This was the only method to ſubdue me:
Terror and doubt fall on me; all thy good
Now blazes: all thy guilt is in the grave:
Never had man ſuch funeral applauſe;
If I lament thee, ſure thy worth was great.
O vengeance! I have follow'd thee too far, [*He is borne off.*
And to receive me hell blows all her fires.

ALVAREZ.

Dreadful effect of jealouſy! a rage
In which the wiſe with caution will engage;
Reluctant long, and tardy to believe,
Where, ſway'd by nature, we ourſelves deceive;
Where our own folly joins the villain's art,
And each man finds a *Zanga* in his heart. [*Exeunt.*

EPI-

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O vengeance! I have follow'd thee too far, [*off.*
And to receive me hell blows all her fires. [*He is borne*

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And each man finds a *Zanga* in his heart. [*Exeunt.*

EPI-

EPILOGUE.

By a FRIEND.

OUR Author ſent me, in an humble ſtrain,
To beg you'd bleſs the offspring of his brain;
And I, your proxy, promis'd in your name,
The Child ſhould live, at leaſt, Six days of fame:
I like the Brat; but ſtill his faults can find;
And, by the Parent's leave, will ſpeak my mind.
Gallants, pray tell me, do you think 'twas well,
To let a willing maid lead apes in hell?
You, nicer Ladies, ſhould you think it right
To eat no Supper——on your Wedding-night?
Shou'd Engliſh *Huſbands dare to ſtarve their Wives,*
Be ſure, they'd lead moſt comfortable lives.
But he loves miſchief, and, with groundleſs fears,
Wou'd fain ſet loving couples by the ears;
Wou'd ſpoil the tender huſbands of our nation,
By teaching them his vile outlandiſh faſhion:
But we've been taught, in our good-natur'd clime,
That Jealouſy, tho' juſt, is ſtill a crime,
And will be ſtill; for, (not to blame the plot)
That ſame Alonzo *was a ſtupid ſot,*
To kill a bride, a miſtreſs unenjoy'd;
'Twere ſome excuſe, had the poor man been cloy'd:

To

To kill her on ſuſpicion, ere he knew
Whether the heinous crime were falſe or true.——
The prieſt ſaid grace; ſhe met him in the bower,
In hopes ſhe might anticipate an hour:——
Love was her errand, but the hot-brain'd Spaniard,
Inſtead of Love—produc'd—a filthy Poniard:——
Had he been wiſe, at this their private meeting,
The proof o'th' Pudding had been in the Eating:
Madam had then been pleas'd, and Don contented,
And all this blood and murder been prevented.
Britons, *be wiſe, and, from this ſad example,*
Ne'er break a Bargain, but firſt take a Sample.

THE

BROTHERS.

A

TRAGEDY.

ACTED at the

THEATRE-ROYAL in DRURY-LANE,

By His MAJESTY's Servants.

THE

BROTHERS

A

TRAGEDY.

Acted at the

THEATRE-ROYAL IN DRURY-LANE,

By His MAJESTY's Servants.

PROLOGUE,

Written by Mr. DODSLEY.

And Spoken by Mr. HAVARD.

THE Tragic muſe, revolving many a page
Of time's long records drawn from every age,
Forms not her plans on low or trivial deeds,
But marks the ſtriking!—When ſome Hero bleeds
To ſave his Country, then her powers inſpire,
And ſouls congenial catch the patriot fire.——
When bold oppreſſion grinds a ſuffering land;
When the keen dagger gleams in murder's hand;
When black conſpiracy infects the throng;
Or fell revenge ſits brooding o'er his wrong;
Then walks ſhe forth in terror; at her frown
Guilt ſhrinks appall'd, tho' ſeated on a throne.
But the rack'd ſoul, when dark ſuſpicions rend;
When Brothers hate, and Sons with Sires contend;
When claſhing intereſts war eternal wage;
And Love, the tendereſt paſſion, turns to Rage;
Then grief on every viſage ſtands impreſt,
And pity throbs in every feeling breaſt;
Hope, fear, and indignation, riſe by turns,
And the ſtrong ſcene with various paſſion burns.

Such is our tale :—Nor bluſh, if tears ſhould flow ;
They're virtue's tribute paid to human woe :
Such drops new luſtre to bright eyes impart ;
The ſilent witneſs of a tender heart :
Such drops adorn the nobleſt Hero's cheek,
And paint his worth, in ſtrokes that more than ſpeak :
Not he who cannot weep, but he who can,
Shews the great ſoul, and proves himſelf a Man.
Yet do not idly grieve at others pain,
Nor let the tears of nature fall in vain :
Watch the cloſe crimes from whence their ills have grown,
And from their *frailties learn to mend* your own.

Dramatis

Dramatis Perſonæ.

MEN.

PHILIP, King of *Macedon*,	Mr. BERRY.
PERSEUS, his elder Son,	Mr. MOSSOP.
DEMETRIUS, his younger Son,	Mr. GARRICK.
PERICLES, the Friend of PERSEUS,	Mr. BLAKES.
ANTIGONUS, a Miniſter of State,	Mr. BURTON.
DYMAS, the King's Favourite,	Mr. SIMSON.
POSTHUMIUS, CURTIUS, *Roman* Ambaſſadors,	Mr. WINSTONE. Mr. MOZEEN.

WOMEN.

ERIXENE, the *Thracian* Princeſs,	Mrs. BELLAMY.
Her Attendant,	Miſs HIPPISLEY.

THE

THE BROTHERS.

A TRAGEDY.

ACT I. SCENE I.

Enter CURTIUS *and* POSTHUMIUS.

CURTIUS.

THERE's ſomething of magnificence about us
I have not ſeen at *Rome*. But you can tell me.
[*Gazes round.*

POSTHUMIUS.

True: Hither ſent on former embaſſies,
I know this ſplendid court of *Macedon*,
And haughty *Philip*, well.

CURTIUS.

His pride preſumes
To treat us here like ſubjects, more than *Romans*,
More than ambaſſadors, who, in our boſoms,

Bear peace and war, and throw him which we pleaſe,
As *Jove* his ſtorm, or ſunſhine, on his creatures.

POSTHUMIUS.

This *Philip* only, ſince *Rome*'s glory roſe,
Preſerves its grandeur to the name of king;
Like a bold ſtar, that ſhews its fires by day.
The *Greek*, who won the world, was ſent before him,
As the grey dawn before the blaze of noon:
Philip had ne'er been conquer'd, but by *Rome*;
And what can fame ſay more of mortal man?

CURTIUS.

I know his public character.

POSTHUMIUS.

It pains me
To turn my thought on his domeſtic ſtate:
There *Philip* is no God; but pours his heart,
In ceaſeleſs groans, o'er his contending ſons;
And pays the ſecret tax of mighty men
To their mortality.

CURTIUS.

But whence the ſtrife,
Which thus afflicts him?

POSTHUMIUS.

From this *Philip*'s bed
Two *Alexanders* ſpring.

CURTIUS.

And but one world?
'Twill never do.

POSTHUMIUS.

They both are bright; but one
Benignly bright, as ſtars to mariners;

And

And one a comet, with malignant blaze,
Denouncing ruin.

CURTIUS.

You mean *Perſeus.*

POSTHUMIUS.

True.
The younger ſon *Demetrius*, you well know,
Was bred at *Rome*, our hoſtage from his father.
Soon after, he was ſent ambaſſador,
When *Philip* fear'd the thunder of our arms.
Rome's manners won him, and his manners *Rome*;
Who granted peace, declaring ſhe forgave,
To his high worth, the conduct of his father.
This gave him all the hearts of *Macedon*;
Which, join'd to his high patronage from *Rome*,
Inflames his jealous brother.

CURTIUS.

Glows there not
A ſecond brand of enmity?

POSTHUMIUS.

O, yes;
The fair *Erixene.*

CURTIUS.

I've partly heard
Her ſmother'd ſtory.

POSTHUMIUS.

Smother'd by the king;
And wiſely too. But thou ſhalt hear it all.
Not ſeals of adamant, not mountains whelm'd
On guilty ſecrets, can exclude the day.
Long burnt a fixt hereditary hate,
Between the crowns of *Macedon* and *Thrace*;

The

The ſword by both too much indulg'd in blood.
Philip, at length, prevail'd; he took, by night,
The town, and palace, of his deadly foe;
Ruſh'd thro' the flames, which he had kindled round,
And ſlew him, bold in vain: Nor reſted there;
But, with unkingly cruelty, deſtroy'd
Two little ſons within their mother's arms;
Thus meaning to tread out thoſe ſparks of war,
Which might one day flame up to ſtrong revenge.
The queen, thro' grief, on her dead ſons expir'd.
One child alone ſurviv'd: A female infant,
Amid theſe horrors, in the cradle ſmil'd.

CURTIUS.

What of that infant?

POSTHUMIUS.

Stung with ſharp remorſe,
The victor took, and gave her to his queen.
The child was bred, and honour'd, as her own;
She grew, ſhe bloom'd; and now her eyes repay
Her brother's wounds on *Philip*'s rival ſons.

CURTIUS.

Is then *Erixene* that *Thracian* child?
How juſt the Gods! from out that ruin'd houſe,
He took a brand, to ſet his own on fire.

POSTHUMIUS.

To give thee, friend, the whole in miniature;
This is the picture of great *Philip*'s court:
The proud, but melancholy king, on high,
Majeſtic ſits, like *Jove* enthron'd in darkneſs;
His ſons are as the thunder in his hand;

And

And the fair *Thracian* princeſs is a ſtar,
That ſparkles by, and gilds the ſolemn ſcene.
[*Shouts heard.*
'Tis their great day, ſupreme of all their year,
The fam'd Luſtration of their martial powers;
Thence, for our audience, choſen by the king.
If he provokes a war, his empire ſhakes,
And all her lofty glories nod to ruin.

CURTIUS.

Who comes?

POSTHUMIUS.

O, that's the jealous elder brother;
Irregular in manners, as in form.
Obſerve the fire, high birth, and empire, kindle!

CURTIUS.

He holds his conference with much emotion.

POSTHUMIUS.

The brothers both can talk, and, in their turns,
Have borne away the prize of eloquence
At *Athens*. Shun his walk: Our own debate
Is now at hand. We'll ſeek his lion Sire,
Who dares to frown on us, his conquerors;
And carries ſo much monarch on his brow,
As if he'd fright us with the wounds we gave him.
[*Exeunt.*

Enter PERSEUS *and* PERICLES.

PERSEUS.

'Tis empire! empire! empire! let that word
Make ſacred all I do, or can attempt!
Had I been born a ſlave, I ſhould affect it:
My nature's fiery, and, of courſe, aſpires.

Who

Who gives an empire, by the gift defeats
All end of giving; and procures contempt
Inſtead of gratitude. An empire loſt,
Deſtroy'd, would leſs confound me, than reſign'd.

PERICLES.

But are you ſure *Demetrius* will attempt?

PERSEUS.

Why does *Rome* court him? For his virtues? No:
To fire him to dominion: To blow up
A civil war; then to ſupport him in it:
He gains the name of king, and *Rome* the power.

PERICLES.

This is indeed the common art of *Rome*.

PERSEUS.

That ſource of juſtice thro' the wond'ring world!
His youth and valour ſecond *Rome*'s deſigns:
The firſt impels him to preſumptuous hope;
The laſt ſupports him in it. Then his perſon!
Thy hand, O nature, has made bold with mine.
Yet more; what words diſtil from his red lip,
To gull the multitude! and they make kings.
Ten thouſand fools, knaves, cowards, lump'd together,
Become all-wiſe, all-righteous, and almighty.
Nor is this all: The fooliſh *Thracian* maid
Prefers the boy to me.

PERICLES.

And does that pain you?

PERSEUS.

O *Pericles*, to death. Is is moſt true,
Thro' hate to him, and not thro' love for her,
I paid my firſt addreſſes; but became

The

The fool I feign'd: My ſighs are now ſincere.
It ſmarts; it burns: O that 'twere fiction ſtill!
By heav'n, ſhe ſeems more beauteous than dominion.

PERICLES.

Dominion, and the princeſs, both are loſt,
Unleſs you gain the king.

PERSEUS.

But how to gain him?
Old men love novelties; the laſt arriv'd
Still pleaſes beſt; the youngeſt ſteals their ſmiles.

PERICLES.

Dymas alone can work him to his pleaſure;
Firſt in eſteem, and keeper of his heart.

PERSEUS.

To *Dymas* thou; and win him to thy will.
In the mean time, I'll ſeek my double rival;
Curb his preſumption, and erect myſelf,
In all the dignity of birth, before him.
Whate'er can ſtir the blood, or ſway the mind,
Is now at ſtake; and double is the loſs,
When an inferior bears away the prize.

PERICLES.

Your brother, dreſs'd for the ſolemnity.

PERSEUS.

To *Dymas* fly! gain him, and think on this:
A prince indebted, is a fortune made.

[*Exit* Pericles.

Enter DEMETRIUS.

DEMETRIUS.

How, brother! unattir'd! Have you forgot
What pomps are due to this illuſtrious day?

PER-

PERSEUS.

I am no gewgaw, for the throng to gaze at;
Some are deſign'd by nature but for ſhew;
The tinſel and the feather of mankind.

DEMETRIUS.

Brother, of that no more: For ſhame, gird on
Your glitt'ring arms, and look like any *Roman*.

PERSEUS.

No, brother; let the *Romans* look like me,
If they're ambitious.—But, I pr'ythee, ſtand;
Let me gaze on thee:—No inglorious figure!
More Romano, as it ought to be.
But what is this that dazles my weak ſight?
There's ſunſhine in thy beaver.

DEMETRIUS.

'Tis that helmet
Which *Alexander* wore at *Granicus*.

PERSEUS.

When he ſubdu'd the world? Ha! is't not ſo?
What world haſt thou ſubdu'd? O, yes; the Fair.
Think'ſt thou there could in *Macedon* be found
No brow might ſuit that golden blaze, but thine?

DEMETRIUS.

I wore it but to grace this ſacred day:
Jar not for trifles.

PERSEUS.

Nothing is a trifle
That argues the preſumption of the ſoul.

DEMETRIUS.

'Tis they preſume, who know not to deſerve.

PERSEUS.

Or who, deſerving, ſcorn ſuperior merit.

DEME-

DEMETRIUS.

Who combats with a brother, wounds himſelf:
Wave private wrath, and ruſh upon the foes
Of *Macedonia.*

PERSEUS.

No; I would not wound
Demetrius' friends.

DEMETRIUS.

Demetrius' friends!

PERSEUS.

The *Romans.*
You copy *Hannibal*, our great ally?
Say, at what altar were you ſworn their foe?
Peace-making brother! Wherefore bring you peace,
But to prevent my glory from the field?
The peace you bring, was meant as war to me.

DEMETRIUS.

Perſeus, be bold when danger's all your own:
War now, were war with *Philip* more than *Rome.*

PERSEUS.

Come, you love peace; that fair cheek hates a ſcar:
You that admire the *Romans*, break the bridge
With *Cocles*, or with *Curtius* leap the gulph;
And league not with the vices of our foes.

DEMETRIUS.

What vices?

PERSEUS.

With their women and their wits.
Your idol *Lælius*; *Lælius* the polite.
I hear, Sir, you take wing, and mount in metre.
Terence has own'd your aid, your comrade *Terence.*
God-like ambition! *Terence* there, the ſlave!

DEMETRIUS.

At *Athens* bred, and to the arts a foe? PER-

PERSEUS.

At *Athens* bred, and borrow arts from *Rome*?

DEMETRIUS.

Brother, I've done: Let our contention ceaſe:
Our mother ſhudders at it in her grave:
And how has *Philip* mourn'd? A dreadful foe,
And awful king; but, O, the tend'reſt parent
That ever wept in fondneſs o'er a child!

PERSEUS.

Why, ay; go tell your father; fondly throw
Your arms around him; ſtroke him to your purpoſe,
As you are wont: I boaſt not ſo much worth;
I am no picture, by the doating eye
To be ſurvey'd, and hung about his neck.
I fight his battles; that's all I can do.
But if you boaſt a piety ſincere,
One way you may ſecure your father's peace;
And one alone—Reſign *Erixene*.

DEMETRIUS.

You flatter me, to think her in my power.
We run our fates together; you deſerve,
And ſhe can judge; proceed we then like friends,
And he who gains her heart, and gains it fairly,
Let him enjoy his gen'rous rival's too.

PERSEUS.

Smooth-ſpeaking, inſincere, inſulting boy!
Is then my crown uſurpt but half thy crime?
Deſiſt, or, by the gods that ſmile on blood!
Not thy fine form, nor yet thy boaſted peace,
Nor patronizing *Rome*, nor *Philip*'s tears,
Nor *Alexander*'s helmet; no, nor, more,
His radiant form, ſhould it alight in thunder,

And

And ſpread its new divinity between us,
Should ſave a brother from a brother's fury. [*Ex.* Per.

DEMETRIUS.

How's this? The waves ne'er ran thus high before.
Reſign thee! yes, *Erixene*, with life!
Thou in whoſe eye, ſo modeſt, and ſo bright,
Love ever wakes, and keeps a veſtal fire,
Ne'er ſhall I wean my fond, fond heart from thee.
But *Perſeus* warms me to rouze all my powers.
As yet I float in dark uncertainty;
For, tho' ſhe ſmiles, I ſound not her deſigns:
I'll fly, fall, tremble, weep upon her feet,
And learn (O all ye gods!) my final doom!
My father! Ha! and on his brow deep thought,
And pale concern! Kind heav'n, aſſwage his ſorrows,
Which ſtrike a damp thro' all my flames of love. [*Exit.*

Enter KING *and* ANTIGONUS.

KING.

Kings of their envy cheat a fooliſh world;
Fate gives us all in ſpite, that we alone
Might have the pain of knowing all is nothing;
The ſeeming means of bliſs but heighten woe,
When impotent, to make their promiſe good:
Hence, kings, at leaſt, bid faireſt to be wretched.

ANTIGONUS.

True, Sir; 'tis empty, or tormenting, all:
The days of life are ſiſters; all alike;
None juſt the ſame; which ſerves to fool us on
Thro' blaſted hopes, with change of fallacy;
While joy is, like to-morrow, ſtill to come;
Nor ends the fruitleſs chace but in the grave.

KING.

KING.

Ay, there, *Antigonus*, this pain will ceaſe,
Which meets me at the banquet; haunts my pillow;
Nor, by the din of arms, is frighted from me.
Conſcience, what art thou? Thou tremendous power!
Who doſt inhabit us without our leave;
And art, within ourſelves, another ſelf;
A maſter ſelf, that loves to domineer,
And treat the monarch frankly as the ſlave.
How doſt thou light a torch to diſtant deeds?
Make the paſt, preſent; and the future, frown?
How, ever and anon, awake the ſoul,
As with a peal of thunder, to ſtrange horrors,
In this long reſtleſs dream, which idiots hug,
Nay, wiſe men flatter with the name of life?

ANTIGONUS.

You think too much.

KING.

I do not think at all:
The gods impoſe, the gods inflict, my thoughts;
And paint my dreams with images of dread.
Laſt night, in ſleep, I ſaw the *Thracian* queen,
And her two murder'd ſons. She frown'd upon me,
And pointed at their wounds. How throbb'd my heart?
How ſhook my couch? And, when the morning came,
The formidable picture ſtill ſubſiſted,
And ſlowly vaniſh'd from my waking eye.
I fear ſome heavy vengeance hangs in air,
And conſcious deities infuſe theſe thoughts,
To warn my ſoul of her approaching doom.
The gods are rigid when they weigh ſuch deeds
As ſpeak a ruthleſs heart; they meaſure blood

By

By drops, and bate not one in the repay.
Could infants hurt me? 'Twas not like a king.

ANTIGONUS.

My lord, I do confeſs the gods are with us;
Stand at our ſide in ev'ry act of life;
And on our pillow watch each ſecret thought;
Nay, ſee it in its embryo, yet unborn.
But their wrath ceaſes on remorſe for guilt;
And well I know your ſorrows touch your ſons;
Nor is it poſſible but time muſt quench
Their flaming ſpirits in a father's tears.

KING.

Vain comfort! I this moment overheard
My jarring ſons with fury ſhake my walls.
Ah! why my curſe from thoſe, that ought to bleſs me?
The queen of *Thrace* can anſwer that ſad queſtion:
She had two ſons; but two: and ſo have I.
Misfortune ſtands with her bow ever bent
Over the world; and he who wounds another,
Directs the goddeſs by that part he wounds,
Where to ſtrike deep her arrows in himſelf.

ANTIGONUS.

I own, I think it time your ſons receive
A father's awful counſel; or, while here,
Now weary nature calls for kind repoſe,
Your curtains will be ſhaken with their broils;
And, when you die, ſons blood may ſtain your tomb.
But other cares demand you now: The *Romans*.

KING.

O change of pain! The *Romans*? Periſh *Rome*!
Thrice happy they, who ſleep in humble life,
Beneath the ſtorm ambition blows. 'Tis meet

The

The Great ſhould have the fame of happineſs,
The conſolation of a little envy;
'Tis all their pay for thoſe ſuperior cares,
Thoſe pangs of heart, their vaſſals ne'er can feel.
Where are theſe ſtrangers? Firſt I'll hear their tale;
Then talk in private with my ſons.

ANTIGONUS.

But how
Intends my lord to make his peace with *Rome*?

KING.

Rome calls me fiery: Let her find me ſo!

ANTIGONUS.

O Sir, forbear! Too late you felt *Rome*'s power.

KING.

Yes, and that reaſon ſtings me more than ever,
To curſe, and hate, and hazard all againſt her.

ANTIGONUS.

Hate her too much to give her battle now;
Nor to your godlike valour owe your ruin.
Greece, *Theſſaly*, *Illyrium*, *Rome* has ſeiz'd;
Your treaſures waſted, and your phalanx thinn'd:
Should ſhe proceed, and ſtrike at *Macedon*,
What would be left of empire?

KING.

Philip: All.
I'll take my throne. Send in theſe foreigners.

SCENE *draws, and diſcovers a magnificent throne,* PERSEUS, DEMETRIUS, *courtiers, &c. attending.* POSTHUMIUS *and* CURTIUS, *the* Roman *ambaſſadors, enter. Trumpets ſound. The* KING *aſcends the throne.*

POSTHUMIUS.

Philip of *Macedon*; To thoſe complaints
Our friends groan out, and you have heard at large,

Rome

Rome now expects an anſwer. She ſits judge,
And will have right on earth.

KING.

Expects an anſwer!
I ſo ſhall anſwer, as becomes a king.

POSTHUMIUS.

Or more, Sir; as becomes a friend of *Rome*.

KING.

Or *Alexander*'s heir, to riſe ſtill higher.
But to the purpoſe. Thus a king to thoſe
That would make kings, and puff them out at pleaſure:
Has *Philip* done amiſs? 'Twas you provok'd him.
My cities, which deſerted in my wars,
I thought it meet to puniſh: You deny'd me.
When I had ſhook the walls of *Marena*,
You pluckt me thence, and took the taken town:
Then you ſent word I ſhould retire from *Greece*,
A conqueſt at my door, by nature mine;
And ſaid, Here end thy realm; as ye were gods!
And gods ye ſhall be, ere *Rome* humbles me.
All this is done; yet *Philip* is your friend!
If this buys friendſhip, where can you find foes?
In what regard will ſtern *Rome* look upon me?
If as a friend, too precious let her hold
Her own eſteem, to caſt a ſtain on mine;
If as an enemy, let her proceed,
And do as ſhe has done; ſhe need no more.

POSTHUMIUS.

The *Romans* do no wrong; yet ſtill are men:
And if to-day an error thwarts their purpoſe,
To-morrow ſets it right: If *Philip* loves
Dominion, and the pride that waits on kings,

(Of

(Of which, perhaps, his words too ſtrongly ſavour)
Humility to *Rome* will lead him to it:
She can give more than common kings can govern.

KING.

Than common kings? Ambaſſador! remember
Cannæ—Where firſt my ſword was fluſht with blood.

DEMETRIUS. [*Aſide, to the king.*]

My lord, forbear.

KING.

And *Hannibal* ſtill lives.

POSTHUMIUS.

Becauſe he fled, at *Capua*.

KING.

There, indeed,
I was not with him.

POSTHUMIUS.

Therefore he fled *alone*——
Since thus you treat us,—hear another charge.
Why here detain you, priſoner of your power,
His daughter, who was once *Rome*'s good ally,
The king of *Thrace*? Why is ſhe not reſtor'd?
For our next meeting you'll provide an anſwer.
What now has paſs'd, for *his* ſake we forgive.
[*Pointing to* Demetrius.
But mark this well: There lies ſome little diſtance,
Philip, between a *Roman* and a king. [*Exeunt* Romans.

KING.

How ſay'ſt, unſceptred boaſter! This to me!
With *Hannibal* I cleft yon *Alpine* rocks;
With *Hannibal* choak'd *Thraſymene* with ſlaughter:
But, O the night of *Cannæ*'s raging field!
When half the *Roman* ſenate lay in blood

Without

Without our tent, and groan'd, as we carous'd!
Immortal gods! for ſuch another hour!
Then throw my carcaſe to the dogs of *Rome*.

ANTIGONUS.

Sir, you forget your ſons.

KING.

Let all withdraw.

[*Exeunt all but the King and his ſons.*

Two paſſions only take up all my ſoul;
Hatred to *Rome*, and tenderneſs for them.
Draw near, my ſons, and liſten to my age.
By what has paſs'd, you ſee the ſtate of things:
Foreign alliance muſt a king ſecure;
And inſolence ſuſtain to ſerve his power:
And if alliances with *Rome* are needful,
Much more among ourſelves. If I muſt bear,
Unmov'd, an inſult from a ſtranger's brow,
Shall not a brother bear a brother's look
Without impatience? Whither all this tends,
I'm ſorry that your conſcious hearts can tell you:
Is it not moſt ſevere? Two ſons alone
Have crown'd my bed; and they too are not brothers.
Look here, and, from my kind regards to you,
Copy ſuch looks as you ſhould bear each other.
Why do I ſigh? Do you not know, my ſons?
And if you do—O let me ſigh no more!
Let theſe white hairs put in a claim to peace!

PERSEUS.

Henceforth, my ſole contention with my brother
Is this; which beſt obeys our father's will.

DEMETRIUS.

Father, if ſimple nature ever ſpeaks

(Of which, perhaps, his words too ſtrongly ſavour)
Humility to *Rome* will lead him to it:
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PERSEUS.

Henceforth, my ſole contention with my brother
Is this; which beſt obeys our father's will.

DEMETRIUS.

Father, if ſimple nature ever ſpeaks

In her own language, ſcorning uſeleſs words,
You ſee her now; ſhe ſwells into my eyes.
I take thee to my heart; I fold thee in it.
[*Embracing* Perſeus.
Our father bids; and that we drank one milk,
Is now the ſmalleſt motive of my love.

KING.

Antigonus, the joy their mother felt
When they were born, was faint to what I feel.

DEMETRIUS.

See, brother, if he does not weep! His love
Runs o'er in venerable tears. I'm rude;
But nature will prevail—My king! My father!
[*Embracing.*

PERSEUS. [*Aſide.*]

Now cannot I let fall a ſingle tear.

KING.

See! the good man has caught it too.

ANTIGONUS.

Such tears,
And ſuch alone, be ſhed in *Macedonia!*

KING.

Be not thou, *Perſeus*, jealous of thy brother;
Nor thou, *Demetrius*, prone to give him cauſe;
Nor either think of empire till I'm dead.
You need not; you reign now; my heart is yours.
Sheath your reſentments in your father's peace;
Come to my boſom both, and ſwear it there.
[*Embracing his ſons.*

ANTIGONUS.

Look down, ye gods, and change me if you can,
This ſight for one more lovely. What ſo ſweet,
So beautiful, on earth, and, ah! ſo rare,

As

As kindred love, and family repoſe!
This, this alliance, *Rome*, will quite undo thee.
See this, proud eaſtern monarchs! and look pale!
Armies are routed, realms o'er-run by this.

KING.

Or if leagu'd worlds ſuperior forces bring,
I'd rather die a Father, than a King.
Fathers alone, a Father's heart can know;
What ſecret tides of ſtill enjoyment flow,
When brothers love! But if their hate ſucceeds,
They wage the war; but 'tis the *Father* bleeds.

[*Exeunt.*

End of the FIRST ACT.

ACT II.

Enter PERSEUS.

PERSEUS.

WHY loiters my ambaſſador to *Dymas*?
His greatneſs will not ſure preſume to ſcorn
A friendſhip offer'd from an heir of empire.
But *Pericles* returns.

[*Enter* Pericles.

Is *Dymas* ours?

PERICLES.

He's cautious, Sir; he's ſubtle; he's a courtier:
Dymas is now for you, now for your brother;
For both, and neither: He's a ſummer-inſect,
And loves the ſunſhine: On his gilded wings,
While the ſcales waver, he'll fly doubtful round you;

And ſing his flatteries to both alike:
The ſcales once fix'd, he'll ſettle on the winner,
And ſwear his pray'rs drew down the victory——
But what ſucceſs had you, Sir, with your brother?

PERSEUS.

All, all my hopes are at the point of death!
The boy triumphant keeps his hold in love:
He's ever warbling nonſenſe in her ear,
With all th' intoxication of ſucceſs.
Darkneſs incloſes me; nor ſee I light
From any quarter dawn, but from his death.

PERICLES.

Why ſtart at *his* death, who reſolves on *yours*?

PERSEUS.

Reſolves on mine!

PERICLES.

Have you not mark'd the princeſs?
You have: With what a beam of majeſty
Her eye ſtrikes ſacred awe! It ſpeaks her mind
Exalted, as it is. Whom loves ſhe then?
Demetrius? no; *Rome*'s darling; who, no doubt,
Dares court her with your empire. And ſhall *Perſeus*
Survive that loſs?—Thus he reſolves your death.

PERSEUS.

Moſt true. What crime then to ſtrike firſt? But how?
Or when? or where? O *Pericles!* aſſiſt me.

PERICLES.

'Tis dangerous.

PERSEUS.

The fitter then for me.

PERICLES.

Wait an occaſion that befriends your wiſhes.

PER-

PERSEUS.

Go, fool, and teach a cataract to creep!
Can thirſt of empire, vengeance, beauty, wait?

PERICLES.

In the mean time, accept a ſtratagem
That muſt ſecure your empire, or your love.
Your brother's *Roman* friendſhips gall no leſs
The king, than you: He dreads their conſequence.
Dymas hates *Rome*; and *Dymas* has a daughter.
How can the king ſo powerfully fix
Demetrius' faith, as by his marriage there?
For *Dymas*, thus (*Rome*'s ſworn, eternal foe)
Becomes a ſpy upon his private life,
And ſurety for his conduct.

PERSEUS.

True——But thus
Our art defeats itſelf. My brother gains
The favourite, and ſo ſtrengthens in his treaſon.

PERICLES.

Think you, he'll wed her? No; the princeſs' eye
Makes no ſuch ſhort liv'd conqueſt. He'll refuſe,
And thus effect what I have ſtrove in vain:
Yes, he'll refuſe; and *Dymas*, in his wrath,
Will liſt for us, and vengeance——Then the king
Will, doubtleſs, much reſent his ſon's refuſal;
And thus we kindle the whole court againſt him.

PERSEUS.

My precious friend, I thank thee. I take wing
On ardent hope: I think it cannot fail.
Go, make thy court to *Dymas* with this ſcheme:
Begone——*Erixene!*—I'll feed her pride [*Looking out.*
Once more; but not expend my breath in vain.

This meeting ſtamps unalterable fate;
I *will* wed her, or vengeance.

[*Enter* Erixene *and* Delia.

O *Erixene!*
O princeſs! colder than your *Thracian* ſnows!
See *Perſeus*, who ne'er ſtoop'd but to the gods,
Proſtrate before you. Fame and Empire ſue.
Why have I conquer'd?—Becauſe you are fair.
What's Empire?—but a title to adore you.
Why do I number in my lineage high
Heroes and gods!—That you, ſcarce leſs divine,
Without a bluſh may liſten to my vows.
My anceſtor ſubdu'd the world. I dare
Beyond his pride, and graſp at more, in you.
Obdurate maid! or turn, or I expire.

ERIXENE.

If love, my lord, is choice, who loves in vain
Should blame himſelf alone; and if 'tis fate,
'Tis fate in all: Why then your blame on me
My crown's precarious, thro' the chance of war;
But ſure my heart's my own. Each villager
Is queen of her affections, and can vent
Her arbitrary ſighs where-e'er ſhe pleaſes.
Shall then the daughter of a race of kings——

PERSEUS.

Madam, you juſtly blame the chance of war:
The gods have been unkind: I am not ſo.
No! *Perſeus* comes to counter-balance fate;
Thrace ne'er was conquer'd,—if you ſmile on me.——
Silent! obdurate ſtill! as cold as death!
But 'tis *Demetrius*——

ERIX-

ERIXENE.

Prince, I take your meaning.
But, if you truly think his worth prevails,
How ſtrange is your requeſt!

PERSEUS.

No, Madam, no;
Tho' Love has hurt my mind, I ſtill can judge
What ſprings the paſſions of the Great controul.
Ambition is firſt miniſter of ſtate;
Love's but a ſecond in the cabinet;
Nor can he feather there his unfledg'd ſhaft
But from ambition's wing: But you conceive
More ſanguine hopes, from him whom *Rome* ſupports,
Than me. You view *Demetrius* on *my* throne;
And thence he ſhines indeed. His charms from thence
Tranſpierce your ſoul, enamour'd of *dominion*.

ERIXENE.

Why now you ſhew me your profound eſteem!
Demetrius' guilt alone has charms for me;
'Tis not the prince, but traitor, wins my love.———
Such inſults are not brook'd by royal minds,
Howe'er their fortunes ebb; and tho' I mourn,
An orphan, and a captive, gods there are———
Fear then an orphan's and a captive's wrong.

PERSEUS.

Your cruel treatment of my paſſion———
But I'll not talk.—This, Madam; only this———
Think not the cauſe, the curſed cauſe of all,
Shall laugh ſecure, and triumph in my pangs:
No; by the torments of an heart on fire,
She gluts my vengeance, who defrauds my love! [*Exit.*

ERIXENE.

What have I done? In what a whirlwind rage
Has ſnatch'd him hence on ill? I frown on *Perſeus*,
And kill *Demetrius*.

DELIA.

Madam, ſee! the prince.

Enter DEMETRIUS.

ERIXENE.

Ah, prince! the tempeſt, which ſo long has low'r'd,
Is now full ripe, and burſting o'er your head.
This moment *Perſeus'* malice flam'd before me;
Victorious rage broke thro' his wonted guard,
And menac'd loud your ruin. Fly! O fly
This inſtant.

DEMETRIUS.

To what refuge?

ERIXENE.

Rome extends
Her longing arms to claſp you for her own.

DEMETRIUS.

Madam, 'tis prudent; I confeſs it is:
But is it loving as true lovers ought,
To be ſo very prudent in our love!
I boaſt not ſo much wiſdom: I prefer
Death at your feet, before the world without you.

ERIXENE.

In danger thus extreme———

DEMETRIUS.

Oh! moſt belov'd!
Lov'd you like me, like me would you diſcern,
That I but execute my brother's purpoſe
By ſuch a flight. At that his clamour, rage,

And

And menace aim, to chaſe a rival hence,
And keep the field alone. Oh! ſhall I leave him
To gaze whole days; to learn to read your eye;
To ſtudy your delights; to chide the wind's
Too rude approach; to bid the ground be ſmooth;
To follow, like your ſhadow, where you go;
Tread in your ſteps; perhaps—to touch your hand.
O death! to miniſter in little things;
From half a glance to prophecy your will,
And do it, ere well form'd in your own mind?
Gods! gods! while worlds divide me from my princeſs,
That, ſhould ſhe call, *Demetrius* might grow old,
Ere he could reach her feet.

ERIXENE.

If *Perſeus'* love
Pains you, it pains me more. Is your heart griev'd?
Mine is tormented: But ſince *Philip*'s ſelf
Is love's great advocate, a flat refuſal
But blows their rage, and haſtens your deſtruction.
Had I not *that* to fear! were *you* ſecure!
I'd eaſe my boſom of it's full diſdain,
And daſh this bold preſumer on his birth.
But, ſee! the grand proceſſion.

DEMETRIUS.

We muſt join it.

Enter the KING, PERSEUS, Romans, ANTIGONUS, *&c.*

KING.

Let the proceſſion halt! and here be paid,
Before yon flaming altar, thanks to heav'n,
That brings us ſafe to this auſpicious day!
The great luſtration of our martial powers,
Which, from its diſtant birth to preſent time,

Unfolds the glories of this antient empire,
And throngs the pride of ages in an hour.

POSTHUMIUS. [*Pointing.*]

What figure's that, O *Philip!* which precedes?

KING.

The founder of our Empire, furious ſon
Of great *Alcides.* We're ally'd to heaven;
And you, I think, call *Romulus* a god.—
That, *Philip*, ſecond of our name; and *here*,
O bend with awe to him, whoſe red right-hand
Hurl'd proud *Darius* like a ſtar from heaven,
With leſſer lights around him, flaming down,
And bid the laurell'd ſons of *Macedonia*
Drink their own *Ganges.*

PERSEUS. [*Aſide to* Demetrius.]

Give him his helmet, brother.

KING. [*To his ſons.*]

You lead the troops that join in mock encounter;
And in no other may you ever meet!
But march one way, and drive the world before you.
The victor, as our antient rites decree,
Muſt hold a feaſt, and triumph in the bowl.

DEMETRIUS.

I long, my lord, to ſee the charge begin;
The brandiſh'd faulchion, and the claſhing helm,
Tho' but in ſport; it is a ſport for men.
Raw *Alexander* thus began his fame,
And overthrew *Darius*, firſt, at home.
We'll practiſe o'er the plans of future conqueſts,
While neighbouring nations tremble at our play;
And own the fault in fortune, not in us,
That we but want a foe, to be immortal.

PER-

PERSEUS.

You have ſupply'd my wants: I thank you, brother.

KING. [*Riſing, and coming forwards. Muſic.*]
How vain all outward effort to ſupply
The ſoul with joy! The noontide ſun is dark,
And muſic diſcord, when the heart is low:
Avert its omen! What a damp hangs on me!
Theſe ſprightly, tuneful airs but ſkim along
The ſurface of my ſoul, not enter there:
She does not dance to this inchanting ſound.
How, like a broken inſtrument, beneath
The ſkilful touch, my joyleſs heart lies dead!
Nor anſwers to the maſter's hand divine!

ANTIGONUS.

When men once reach their autumn, ſickly joys
Fall off apace, as yellow leaves from trees,
At ev'ry little breath misfortune blows;
Till, left quite naked of their happineſs,
In the chill blaſts of winter they expire.
This is the common lot. Have comfort then:
Your grief will damp the triumph.

KING.

It is over.
Hear too; the trumpet calls us to the field,
And now this phantom of a fight begins.
Fair princeſs, you and I will go together,
As *Priam* and bright *Helen* did of old,
To view the war. Your eyes will make them bolder,
And raiſe the price of victory itſelf.

[*All go out but* Perſeus, *who has obſerved* Demetrius *and* Erixene *all this time converſing, and ſtays behind thoughtful and diſturb'd.*

PER-

PERSEUS.

Before my face ſhe feeds him with her ſmiles:
The king looks on, nor diſapproves the crime;
And the boy takes them as not due to me.
Without remorſe as happy as ſhe'll make him.
Periſh all three! I'll ſeek allies elſewhere;
Father and brother, nay, a miſtreſs too.
Deſtruction, riſe! Though thou art black as *night*
Thy mother, and as hideous as *deſpair*;
I'll claſp thee thus, nor think of woman more.
How the boy doats, and drinks in at his eyes
Her poiſon! O to ſtab him in her arms!
And yet do leſs than they have done to me.

Enter PERICLES.

PERICLES.

Where is my prince? The nation's on the wing;
No boſom but exults; no hand but bears
A garland, or a trophy: And ſhall *Perſeus*——

PERSEUS.

Vengeance!

[*Shout within.*

PERICLES.

Hear how with ſhouts they rend the ſkies!

PERSEUS.

Give me my vengeance!

PERICLES.

Forty thouſand men,
In poliſh'd armour, ſhine againſt the ſun.

PERSEUS.

Dare but another word, and not of vengeance,
And I will uſe thee, as I wou'd—my brother.

PERI-

PERICLES.

Vengeance! on whom?

PERSEUS.

On him.

PERICLES.

What vengeance?

PERSEUS.

Blood.

PERICLES.

'Tis yours.

PERSEUS.

What god will give it me?

PERICLES.

Your own right-hand.

PERSEUS.

I dare not—for my father.

PERICLES.

You ſhall dare.

PERSEUS.

Shalt thou dare give encouragement to *Perſeus?*
Unfold thy purpoſe; I'll outſhoot the mark.

PERICLES.

Where are you going?

PERSEUS.

To the mock encounter.

PERICLES.

What more like mock encounter than the *true?*

PERSEUS.

Enough—He's dead! 'Twas accident; 'twas error:
No matter what. Ten thouſand ſhare the blame.

PERICLES.

Hold, Sir! I had forgot: On this occaſion,
The troops are ſearch'd; and foils alone are worn,
Inſtead of ſwords.

PER-

PERSEUS.

An oſier were enough.
Who pains my heart, plants thunder in my hand.

PERICLES.

But ſhould this fail—

PERSEUS.

Impoſſible!

PERICLES.

But, ſhould it,
The banquet follows.

PERSEUS.

Poiſon in his wine.
I thank the gods! my ſpirits are reviv'd!
I draw immortal vigour from that bowl!

PERICLES.

Nay, ſhould both fail, the field and banquet too,
All fails not; fairer hopes to fair ſucceed:
For know, my lord, the king receiv'd with joy
The marriage-ſcheme, and ſent for *Dymas'* daughter.

PERSEUS.

Then there's a ſecond bowl of poiſon for him.

PERICLES.

Yet more: This ev'ning thoſe ambaſſadors,
Which *Philip* ſent to *Rome*, beneath the name
Of public buſineſs, but, in truth, to learn
Your brother's conduct, are expected home.

PERSEUS.

Thoſe whom I ſwore, before they parted hence,
In dreadful ſacraments of wine and blood,
To bring back ſuch reports, as ſhou'd deſtroy him:—
And what if, to complete our ſecret plan,
We feign a letter to his friend the conſul,
To ſtrengthen our ambaſſadors report?

PERI-

PERICLES.

That care, my lord, be mine: I know a knave,
Grown fat on forgery; he'll counterfeit
Old *Quintius'* hand and ſeal, by former letters
Sent to the king; which you can gain with eaſe.

PERSEUS.

Obſerve—This morning, at their interview,
The *Romans*, in effect, inform'd the king,
That *Thrace* was theirs, and order'd him reſtore
The princeſs. This will give much air of truth,
If our forg'd letters ſay the *Romans* crown
Demetrius king of *Thrace*, and promiſe more.

PERICLES.

My lord, it ſhall be done.

PERSEUS.

All cannot fail. [*Trumpets.*

PERICLES.

The trumpets ſound; the troops are mounted.

PERSEUS.

Vengeance!
Sweet vengeance calls: Nor ever call'd a god
Such ſwift obedience: Like the rapid wheel,
I kindle in the courſe; I'm there already;
Snatch the bright weapon; bound into my ſeat;
Strike; triumph; ſee him gaſping on the ground,
And life, love, empire, ſpringing from his wound.
When god-like ends, by means unjuſt, ſucceed,
The great reſult adorns the daring deed.
Virtue's a ſhackle, under fair diſguiſe,
To fetter fools, while we bear off the prize.
[*Exeunt.*

End of the SECOND ACT.

ACT

ACT III.

Enter PERSEUS.

PERSEUS.

COWARDS in ill, like cowards in the field,
Are ſure to be defeated. To ſtrike home,
In both, is prudence: Guilt, begun, muſt fly
To guilt conſummate, to be ſafe.

Enter PERICLES.

PERICLES.

My lord———

PERSEUS.

Diſturb not my devotions; they decline
The beaten track, the common path of pray'r——
Ye pow'rs of darkneſs! that rejoice in ill;
All ſworn by *Styx*, with peſtilential blaſts
To wither every virtue in the bud;
To keep the door of dark conſpiracy,
And ſnuff the grateful fumes of human blood!
From ſulphur blue, or your red beds of fire,
Or your black ebon thrones, auſpicious riſe;
And, burſting thro' the barriers of this world,
Stand in dread contraſt to the golden ſun;
Fright daylight hence with your infernal ſmiles,
And howl aloud your formidable joy,
While I tranſport you with the fair record
Of what your faithful miniſter has done,

Beyond

Beyond your inſpiration, ſelf-impell'd,
To ſpread your empire, and ſecure his own.
Hear, and applaud.—Now, *Pericles!* proceed:
Speak; is the letter forg'd?

PERICLES.

This moment; and might cheat
The cunning eye of jealouſy itſelf.

PERSEUS.

'Tis well: Art thou appris'd of what hath paſt
Since laſt we parted?

PERICLES.

No, my lord.

PERSEUS.

Then rouſe
Thy whole attention: Here we are in private:
Know then, my *Pericles*, the mock encounter
I turn'd, as taught by thee, to real rage.
But blaſted be the cowards which I led!
They trembled at a boy.

PERICLES.

Ha!

PERSEUS.

Mark me well:
The villains fled; but ſoon my prudence turn'd
To good account that momentary ſhame.
Thus——I pretend 'twas voluntary flight
To ſave a brother's blood; accuſing him
As author of that conflict I declin'd,
And he purſu'd with ardour and ſucceſs.

PERICLES.

That's artful. What enſu'd?

PERSEUS.

The banquet follow'd.

Held

Held by the victor, as our rites require:
To which his eaſy nature, ſoon appeas'd,
Invited me: I went not; but ſent ſpies
To learn what paſs'd: which ſpies, by chance detected,
(Obſerve me) were ill us'd.

PERICLES.

By whom? your brother?

PERSEUS.

No; by his ſons of riot. He ſoon after,
Not knowing that my ſervants were abus'd,
Kind, and gay-hearted, came to viſit me.
They, who miſus'd my ſpies, for ſelf-defence,
Conceal'd their arms beneath the robes of peace.
Of this inform'd, again my genius ſerv'd me.——

PERICLES.

You took occaſion, from theſe few in arms,
To charge a murderous aſſault on all.

PERSEUS.

True, *Pericles:* But mark my whole addreſs:
Againſt my brother ſwift I bar my gates;
Fly to my father; and, with artful tears,
Accuſe *Demetrius*; *firſt*, of turning ſports,
And guiltleſs exerciſe, to mortal rage;
Then, of inviting me (ſtill blacker guilt!)
To ſmiling death in an invenom'd bowl;
And, *laſt*, that, both theſe failing, mad with rage,
He threw his ſchemes of baffled art aſide,
And with arm'd men avow'dly ſought my life.

PERICLES.

Three ſtartling articles, and well concerted,
Following each other in an eaſy train,
With fair ſimilitude of truth! But, Sir,
How bore your father?

PER-

PERSEUS.

Oh! he ſhook! he fell!
Nor was his fleeting ſoul recall'd with eaſe.

PERICLES.

What ſaid he, when recover'd?

PERSEUS.

His reſolve
I know not yet; but, ſee, his minion comes;
And comes perhaps to tell me—But I'll go;
Suſtain my part, and echo loud my wrongs.
Nought ſo like innocence, as perfect guilt.
If he brings aught of moment, you'll inform me.

[*As* Perſeus *goes off, he is ſeized by officers.*

Enter DYMAS.

PERICLES.

How fares the king?

DYMAS.

Ev'n as an aged oak
Puſht to and fro, the labour of the ſtorm;
Whoſe largeſt branches are ſtruck off by thunder;
Yet ſtill he lives, and on the mountain groans;
Strong in affliction, awful from his wounds,
And more rever'd in ruin, than in glory.

PERICLES.

I hear prince *Perſeus* has accus'd his brother.

DYMAS.

True; and the king's commands are now gone forth
To throw them both in chains; for farther thought
Makes *Philip* doubt the truth of *Perſeus'* charge.

PERICLES.

What then is his deſign?

DYMAS.

They both this hour

Muſt

Muſt plead their cauſe before him: Nay, already,
His nobles, judges, counſellors, are met;
And public juſtice wears her ſterneſt form:
A more momentous trial ne'er was known;
Whether the pleaders you ſurvey as brothers,
Or princes known in arts, or fam'd for arms;
Whether you ponder, in their awful judge,
The tender parent, or the mighty king.
Greece, Athens hears the cauſe: The great reſult
Is life or death; is infamy, or fame. [*Trumpets.*

PERICLES.

What trumpets theſe?

DYMAS.

They ſummon to the court.

[*Exeunt.*

SCENE *draws, the* Court, King, *&c.*

Enter DYMAS, *and takes his place by the* KING.

KING.

Bring forth the priſoners.
Strange trial this! Here ſit I to debate,
Which vital limb to lop, nor that to ſave,
But render wretched life more wretched ſtill.
What ſee I, but heav'n's vengeance, in my ſons?
Their guilt a ſcourge for mine: 'Tis thus heav'n writes
Its awful meaning, plain in human *deeds*,
And *language* leaves to man.

Enter PERSEUS *and* DEMETRIUS *in chains, from different ſides of the ſtage*; Perſeus *follow'd by* Pericles, *and* Demetrius *by* Antigonus.

DYMAS.

Dread Sir, your ſons.

KING.

I have no ſons; and that I ever had, Is

Is now my heavieſt curſe: And yet what care,
What pains, I took to curb their riſing rage!
How often have I rang'd thro' hiſtory
To find examples for their private uſe?
The *Theban* brothers did I ſet before them——
What blood! what deſolation! but in vain!
For thee, *Demetrius*, did I go to *Rome*,
And bring thee patterns thence of brothers love;
The *Quintii*, and the *Scipio's*: But in vain!
If I'm a monarch, where is your obedience?
If I'm a father, where's your duty to me?
If old, your veneration due to years?
But I have wept, and you have ſworn, in vain!
I had your ear, and enmity your heart.
How was this morning's counſel thrown away!
How happy is your mother in the grave!
She, when ſhe bore you, ſuffer'd leſs: Her pangs,
Her pungent pangs, throb thro' the father's heart.

DEMETRIUS.

You can't condemn me, Sir, to worſe than this.

KING.

Than what, thou young deceiver? While I live,
You both with impious wiſhes graſp my ſceptre:
Nothing is ſacred, nothing dear, but Empire;
Brother, nor father, can you bear; fierce luſt
Of Empire burns, extinguiſh'd all beſide.
Why pant you for it? To give others awe?
Be therefore aw'd yourſelves, and tremble at it,
While in a father's hand.

DYMAS.

My lord, your warmth
Defers the buſineſs.

KING.

KING.

Am I then *too* warm?
They that ſhould ſhelter me from ev'ry blaſt,
To be themſelves the ſtorm! O! how *Rome* triumphs!
Oh! how they bring this hoary head to ſhame!
Conqueſt and fame, the labour of my life,
Now turn againſt me; and call in the world
To gaze at what *was Philip*, but who now
Wants ev'n the wretch's privilege—a Wiſh.
What can I wiſh? *Demetrius* may be guiltleſs.
What then is *Perſeus?* Judgment hangs as yet
Doubtful o'er them; but I'm condemn'd already;
For both are mine; and one—is foul as hell.
Should theſe two hands wage war, (theſe hands leſs dear!)
What boots it which prevails? In both I bleed.
But I have done. Speak, *Perſeus*, and at large;
You'll have no ſecond hearing. Thou forbear.

[*To* Demetrius.

PERSEUS.

Speak!—'Twas with utmoſt ſtruggle I forbore.
Theſe chains were ſcarce deſign'd to reach my tongue:
Their treſpaſs is ſufficient, ſtopping here.

[*Shewing his arms.*

Theſe chains! for what? Are chains for innocence?
Not ſo; for, ſee, *Demetrius* wears them too.
Fool that I was, to tremble at vain laws;
Nor learn from him defiance of their frown;
Since innocence and guilt are us'd alike;
Blood-thirſty ſtabbers, and their deſtin'd prey;
Perſeus, and He—I will not call him brother:

[*Pointing to* Demetrius.

He wants not that enhancement of his guilt.

KING.

KING.

But closer to the point; and lay before us
Your whole deportment this ill-fated day.

PERSEUS.

Scarce was he cool from that embrace this morning,
Which you injoin'd, and I sincerely gave;
Nor thought he plann'd my death within my arms;
When holding vile, oaths, honour, duty, love,
He fir'd our friendly sports to martial rage.
If war, why not *fair* war? But *that* has danger.
From hostile conflict, as from brothers play,
He blush'd not to invite me to his banquet.
I went not; and in that was I to blame?
Think you, there nothing had been found but peace,
From whence soon after sally'd armed men?
Think you, I nothing had to fear from swords,
When from their *foils* I scarce escap'd with life?
Or poison might *his* valour suit as well:
This pass'd, as suits his wisdom, *Macedonians!*
Who volts o'er elder brothers to a throne,
With an arm'd rout he came to visit me.
Did I refuse to go, a bidden guest?
And should I welcome him, a threat'ning foe?
Resenting my refusal; boiling for revenge!

DEMETRIUS.

'Tis false.

ANTIGONUS.

Forbear—The king!

PERSEUS.

Had I receiv'd them,
You now had mourn'd my death, not heard my cause.—
Dares he deny he brought an armed throng?

Call

Call thoſe I name; who dare this deed, dare all;
Yet will not dare deny, that this is true.
My death alone can yield a ſtronger proof;
Will no leſs proof than *that* content a father?

PERICLES.

Perſeus, you ſee, has art, as well as fire;
Nor have the wars worn *Athens* from his tongue.

PERSEUS.

Let him, who ſeeks to bathe in brother's blood,
Not find well-pleas'd the fountain whence it flow'd:
Let him, who ſhudders at a brother's knife,
Find refuge in the boſom of a father:
For where elſe can I fly? whom elſe implore?
I have no *Romans*, with their eagles wings,
To ſhelter me; *Demetrius* borrows thoſe,
To mount full rebel-high: I have their hatred;
And, thanks to heav'n! *deſerve* it: Good *Demetrius*
Can ſee your towns and kingdoms torn away
By theſe *protectors*; and ne'er loſe his temper.
My weakneſs! I confeſs, it makes me rave;
It makes me weep—and my tears rarely flow.

PERICLES.

Was ever ſtronger proof of filial love?

PERSEUS.

Vain are *Rome*'s hopes, while you and I ſurvive:
But ſhou'd the ſword take me, and age my father,
(Heav'n grant they leave him to the ſtroke of age!
The kingdom, and the king, are both their own;
A duteous loyal king, a ſceptred ſlave,
A willing *Macedonian* ſlave to *Rome*.

KING.

Firſt let an earthquake ſwallow *Macedonia*.

PER-

PERSEUS.

How, at ſuch news, would *Hannibal* rejoice?
How the great ſhade of *Alexander* ſmile?
The thought quite choaks me up: I can no more.

KING.

Proceed!

PERSEUS.

No, Sir—Why have I ſpoke at all?
'Twas needleſs: *Philip* juſtifies my charge;
Philip's the ſingle witneſs which I call,
To prove *Demetrius* guilty.

KING.

What doſt mean?

PERSEUS.

What mean I, Sir, what mean I!—To run mad;
For who, unſhaken both in heart and brain,
Can recollect it!

KING.

What?

PERSEUS.

This morning's inſult.
This morning they proclaim'd him *Philip*'s king:
This morning they forgave you for his ſake.
O pardon, pardon!——I could ſtrike him dead.

KING.

More temper.

PERSEUS.

Not more truth; that cannot be!
And that it cannot, one proof can't eſcape you;
For what but truth could make me, Sir, ſo bold?
Rome puts forth all her ſtrength to crown her minion.
Demetrius' vices, thriving of themſelves,
Her fulſome flatt'ries dung to ranker growth.

Demetrius is the burden of her ſong;
Each river, hill, and dale, has learnt his name;
While elder *Perſeus* in a whiſper dies.
Demetrius treats; *Demetrius* gives us peace;
Demetrius is our god, and *would* be ſo.——
My ſight is ſhort: Look on him you that can:
What ſage experience ſits upon his brow,
What aweful marks of wiſdom, who vouchſafes
To patronize a Father, and a King.
Such patronage is treaſon.

KING.

Treaſon! Death!

PERSEUS.

Nor let the ties of blood bind up the hands
Of juſtice; Nature's ties are broke already:
For, who contend before you?—Your two ſons?
No; read aright; 'tis *Macedon*, and *Rome*.
A well-maſk'd foreigner, and your—*only* ſon,
Guard of your life, and—exile of your love.
Now, bear me to my dungeon: What ſo fit
As darkneſs, chains, and death, for ſuch a traitor?

KING.

Speak, *Demetrius*.

ANTIGONUS.

My lord, he cannot ſpeak; accept his tears——
Inſtead of words.

PERSEUS.

His tears as falſe as they.——
Now, with fine phraſe, and foppery of tongue,
More graceful action, and a ſmoother tone,
That orator of fable, and fair face,
Will ſteal on your brib'd hearts, and, as you liſten,
Plain truth, and I, plain *Perſeus*, are forgot. DE-

DEMETRIUS.

My father! King! and Judge! thrice aweful power!
Your Son, your Subject, and your Priſoner, hear;
Thrice humble ſtate! If I have grace of ſpeech,
(Which gives, it ſeems, offence) be that no crime,
Which oft has ſerv'd my country, and my king:
Nor in my brother let it paſs for virtue,
That, as he is, ungracious he would ſeem:
For, oh! he wants not art, tho' grace may fail him.
The wonted aids of thoſe that are accus'd,
Has my accuſer ſeiz'd. He ſhed falſe tears,
That my true ſorrows might ſuſpected flow:
He ſeeks *my* life, and calls *me* Murderer;
And vows no refuge can *he* find on earth,
That *I* may want it in a father's arms;
Thoſe arms, to which e'en ſtrangers fly for ſafety.

KING.

Speak to your charge.

DEMETRIUS.

He charges me with treaſon;
If I'm a traitor, if I league with *Rome*,
Why did his zeal forbear me till this hour?
Was treaſon then no crime, till (as he feigns)
I ſought his life? Dares *Perſeus* hold, ſo much,
His father's welfare cheaper than his own?
Leſs cauſe have I, a brother, to complain.
He ſays, I wade for Empire thro' his blood:
He ſays, I place my confidence in *Rome*:
Why murder him, if *Rome* will crown my brow?
Will then a ſceptre, dipt in brother's blood,
Conciliate love, and make my reign ſecure?

False are both charges; and he proves them false,
By placing them together.

ANTIGONUS.

That's well urg'd.

DEMETRIUS.

Mark, Sir, how *Perseus*, unawares, absolves me
From guilt in all, by loading all with guilt.
Did I design him poison at my feast?
Why then did I provoke him in the field?
That, as he did, he might refuse to come?
When angry he refus'd, I should have sooth'd
His rous'd resentment, and deferr'd the blow;
Not destin'd him that moment to my sword,
Which I before instructed him to shun.
Thro' fear of death, did he decline my banquet?
Cou'd I expect admittance then at his?
These numerous pleas at variance, overthrow
Each other, and are advocates for me.

PERSEUS.

No, Sir; *Posthumius* is his advocate.

KING.

Art thou afraid that I should hear him out?

DEMETRIUS.

Quit then this picture, this well-painted fear,
And come to that, which touches him indeed.
Why is *Demetrius* not despis'd of all,
His second in endowments, as in birth?
How dare I draw the thoughts of *Macedon?*
How dare I gain esteem with foreign powers?
Esteem, when gain'd, how dare I to preserve?
These are his secret thoughts; these burn within;
These sting up accusations in his soul,

Turn

Turn friendly viſits to foul fraud, and murder;
And pour in poiſon to the bowl of love.
Merit is *Treaſon* in a younger brother.

KING.

But clear your conduct with regard to *Rome*.

DEMETRIUS.

Alas! dread Sir, I grieve to find ſet down,
Among my crimes, what ought to be my praiſe.
That I went hoſtage, or ambaſſador,
Was *Philip*'s high command, not my requeſt:
Indeed, when there, in both thoſe characters,
I bore in mind to whom I owe my birth:
Rome's favour follow'd. If it is a crime
To be regarded, ſpare a crime you caus'd;
Caus'd by your orders, and example too.
True, I'm *Rome*'s friend, while *Rome* is your ally:
When not, this hoſtage, this ambaſſador,
So dear, ſtands forth the fierceſt of her foes;
At your command, flies ſwift on wings of fire,
The native thunder of a father's arm.

ANTIGONUS.

There ſpoke at once, the Hero, and the Son.

DEMETRIUS.

To cloſe—To thee, I grant, ſome thanks are due;
[*Speaking to* Perſeus.
Not for thy kindneſs, but malignity:
Thy character's my friend, tho' thou my foe:
For, ſay, whoſe temper promiſes moſt guilt?
Perſeus, importunate, demands my death:
I do not aſk for his: Ah! no; I feel
Too pow'rful nature pleading for him *here*:
But, were there no fraternal tie to bind me,

A ſon of *Philip* muſt be dear to me.
If you, my father, had been angry with me,
An elder brother, a leſs aweful *parent*,
He ſhould aſſwage you, he ſhould intercede,
Soften my failings, and indulge my youth:
But my aſylum drops its character;
I find not there my reſcue, but my ruin.

PERSEUS.

His bold aſſurance———

KING.

Do not interrupt him;
But let thy brother finiſh his defence.

DEMETRIUS.

O *Perſeus!* how I tremble as I ſpeak!
Where is a brother's voice; a brother's eye?
Where is the melting of a brother's heart?
Where is our aweful father's dread command?
Where a dear, dying mother's laſt requeſt?
Forgot, ſcorn'd, hated, trodden under foot!
Thy heart, how dead to ev'ry call of nature!
Unſon'd! unbrother'd! nay, unhumaniz'd!
Far from affection, as thou'rt near in blood!
Oh! *Perſeus*, *Perſeus!*—But my heart's too full.

[*Falls on* Antigonus.

KING.

Support him.

PERSEUS.

Vengeance overtakes his crimes.

KING.

No more!

ANTIGONUS.

See, from his hoary brow, he wipes the dew,
Which agony wrings from him.

KING.

KING.

Oh! my friend,
Theſe boys at ſtrife, like *Ætna*'s ſtruggling flames,
Convulſions cauſe, and make a mountain ſhake;
Shake *Philip*'s firmneſs, and convulſe his heart;
And, with a fiery flood of civil war,
Threaten to deluge my divided land.
I've heard them both; by neither am convinc'd:
And yet *Demetrius*' words went thro' my heart.——
A double crime, *Demetrius*, is your charge;
Fondneſs for *Rome*, and hatred to your brother.
If you can clear your innocence in one,
'Twill give us cauſe to think you wrong'd in both.

DEMETRIUS.

How ſhall I clear it, Sir?

KING.

This honeſt man
Deteſts the *Romans*: If you wed his daughter,
Rome's foe becomes the guardian of your faith.

DEMETRIUS.

I told you, Sir, when I return'd from *Rome*——

KING.

How!—Doſt thou want an abſolute command?
Your Brother, Father, Country, all exact it.

ANTIGONUS. [*Aſide to* Demetrius.]

See yonder guards at hand, if you refuſe.
Nay, more; a father, ſo diſtreſs'd, demands
A ſon's compaſſion, to becalm his heart.
Oh! Sir, comply.

DEMETRIUS. [*Aſide to* Antigonus.]

There! there! indeed, you touch me!
Beſides, if I'm confin'd, and *Perſeus* free,

I never, never, ſhall behold *her* more.——
Pardon, ye gods! an artifice forc'd on me.
Dread Sir, your ſon complies. [*To the king.*

DYMAS.

Aſtoniſhment!

KING.

Strike off his chains. Nay, *Perſeus* too is free:
They wear no bonds, but thoſe of duty, now.
Dymas, go, thank the prince: He weds your daughter;
And higheſt honours pay your high deſert.

[*Exeunt all but* Dymas *and* Demetrius.

DYMAS.

O, Sir, without preſumption, may I dare
To lift my raviſh'd thought?——

DEMETRIUS.

In what I've done,
I paid a duty to my father's will:
And ſet you an example, where 'tis due,
Of not with-holding yours.

DYMAS.

My duty, Sir,
To you, can never fail.

DEMETRIUS.

Then, *Dymas*, I requeſt thee,
Go ſeek the king, and ſave me from a marriage
My brother has contriv'd, in artful malice,
To make me loſe my Father, or my Love.
Go, charge the juſt refuſal on thyſelf.

DYMAS.

What *Philip* authorizes me to wiſh,
You, Sir, may diſappoint: But, to take on me
The load of the refuſal——

DEMETRIUS.

Is no more Than

Than *Dymas* owes his honour, if he'd ſhun
The natural ſurmiſe, that he concurr'd
In brewing this foul treaſon.

DYMAS.

Sir, the king
Knows what he does; and, if he ſeeks my glory—

DEMETRIUS.

In a degree, deſtructive of his own,
'Tis yours to diſappoint him, or renounce
Your duty to your king.

DYMAS.

You'll better tell——

DEMETRIUS.

Yes, better tell the king, he wounds his honour,
By lifting up a *minion* from the duſt,
And mating him with princes. Uſe your power
Againſt yourſelf: Yes, uſe it, like a man,
In ſerving him who gave it. Thus you'll make
Indulgence, juſtice, and abſolve your maſter.
Tho' kings delight in raiſing what they love,
Leſs owe they to themſelves, than to the throne;
Nor muſt they proſtitute its majeſty,
To ſwell a ſubject's pride, howe'er deſerving.

DYMAS.

What the king grants me——

DEMETRIUS.

Talk not of a grant:
What a king *ought not*, that he *cannot* give;
And what is more than meet from princes bounty,
Is plunder, not a grant. Think you, his honour
A perquiſite belonging to your place,
As favourite *paramount?* Preſerve the king

From doing wrong, tho' wrong is done for *you*;
And ſhew, 'tis not in favour to corrupt thee.

DYMAS.

I ſought not, Sir, this honour.

DEMETRIUS.

But would take it.
True majeſty's the very ſoul of kings;
And, rectitude's the ſoul of majeſty:
If mining minions ſap that rectitude,
The king may live, but majeſty expires:
And he that leſſens majeſty, impairs
That juſt obedience public good requires;
Doubly a traitor, to the Crown, and State.

DYMAS.

Muſt I refuſe what *Philip*'s pleas'd to give?

DEMETRIUS.

Can a king give thee more than is his *Own?*
Know, a king's dignity is *public* wealth;
On that ſubſiſts the nation's fame, and power.
Shall fawning ſycophants, to plump themſelves,
Eat up their maſter, and dethrone his glory?
What are ſuch wretches? What, but vapours foul,
From fens and bogs, by royal beams exhal'd,
That radiance intercepting, which ſhould chear
The land at large? Hence ſubjects hearts grow cold,
And frozen loyalty forgets to flow:
But, then 'tis ſlipp'ry ſtanding for the *minion:*
Stains on his ermin, to their royal maſter
Such miſcreants are; not jewels in his crown.
If you perſiſt, Sir—But, of words, no more!
To me, to treat, is harder than to do!

DYMAS.

Let me embrace this genuine ſon of Empire.

When

When warm debates divide the doubtful land,
Should I not know the prince moſt fit to reign?
I've try'd you, as an eagle tries her young,
And find, your dauntleſs eye is fix'd on glory.
I'll to the king, and your commands obey.——
We muſt give young men opiates in a fever. [*Aſide.*
Yes, boy, I will obey thee, to thy ruin.
Erixene ſhall ſtrike thee dead for this. [*Exit* Dymas.

DEMETRIUS.

Theſe Stateſmen nothing woo, but Gold and Power.
I'm a bold advocate for *other* love;
Tho', at *their* bar, indicted for a fool.
When reaſon, like the ſkilful Charioteer
Can break the fiery paſſions to the bit,
And, ſpite of their licentious ſallies, keep
The radiant track of glory; paſſions, then,
Are aids and ornaments. Triumphant reaſon,
Firm in her ſeat, and ſwift in her career,
Enjoys their violence, and, ſmiling, thanks
Their formidable flame, for high renown.
Take then my ſoul, fair maid! 'tis wholly thine;
And thence I feel an energy divine.
When objects, worthy praiſe, our hearts approve,
Each virtue grows on conſecrated love:
And, ſure, ſoft paſſion *claims* to be forgiv'n,
When love of beauty is the love of heav'n.

End of the THIRD ACT.

ACT

ACT IV.

Enter ERIXENE *and* DELIA.

ERIXENE.

'TIS plain! 'tis plain! this marriage gains her father:
He join'd to *Rome*, the crown. Thy words were true:
He wooes the diadem; that diadem which I
Deſpis'd for him. O, how unlike our loves!
But it is well; he gives me my revenge.
Wed *Dymas'* daughter! What a fall is there?
Not the world's empire could repair his glory.

DELIA.

Madam, you can't be mov'd too much!—But why
More now than at the firſt?

ERIXENE.

At firſt I doubted:
For who, that lov'd like me, could have believ'd?
I diſbeliev'd what *Pericles* reported;
And thought it *Perſeus'* art to wound our loves.
But when the good *Antigonus*, ſworn friend
To falſe *Demetrius*, when *his* word confirm'd it,
Then paſſion took me, as the northern blaſt
An autumn leaf. O gods! the dreadful whirl!
But, while I ſpeak, he's with her: Laughs and plays;
Mingles his dalliance with inſulting mirth;
To this new goddeſs offers up *my* tears;
Yes, with *my* ſhame and torture, wooes her love.

I ſee,

I ſee, hear, feel it! O theſe raging fires!
Can then the thing we ſcorn give ſo much pain?

DELIA.

Madam, theſe tranſports give him cauſe to triumph!

ERIXENE.

I vent my grief to thee; *he* ne'er ſhall know it.
If I can't conquer, I'll conceal my paſſion;
And ſtifle all its pangs beneath diſdain.

DELIA.

The greateſt minds are moſt relenting too:
If then *Demetrius* ſhould repent his crime——

ERIXENE.

If ſtill my paſſion burns, it ſhall burn inward:
On the fierce rack in ſilence I'll expire,
Before one ſigh eſcape me——*He* repent!
What wild extravagance of thought is thine?
But did he? Who repents, has once been falſe:
In love, repentance but declares our guilt;
And injur'd honour—ſhall exact its due.
In vain *his* love, nay, *mine*, ſhould groan in vain!
Both are devoted. Vengeance, vengeance, reigns!
Our firſt love murder'd, is the ſharpeſt pang
A human heart can feel.

DELIA.

The king approaches.

Enter the KING, *&c.*

KING.

Madam, at length we ſee the dawn of peace,
And hope an end of our domeſtic jars.
The jealous *Perſeus* can no longer fear
Demetrius is a *Roman*; ſince this day
Makes him the ſon of *Dymas*, *Rome*'s worſt foe.

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ERIX-

ERIXENE.

Already, Sir, I've heard, and heard with joy,
Th' important news.

KING.

To make our bliſs run o'er,
You, Madam, will complete what heav'n begins;
And ſave the love-ſick *Perſeus* from deſpair:
That marriage would leave *Rome* without pretence
To touch our conqueſt; and for ever join
To theſe dominions long-diſputed *Thrace*.

Enter DYMAS.

ERIXENE.

Tho' *Thrace* by conqueſt ſtoops to *Macedon*,
I know my rank, and would preſerve its due.
With meditated coldneſs have I heard
Prince *Perſeus'* vows; unwilling to conſent,
Before reſtor'd to my forefathers throne,
Leſt that conſent ſhould merit little thanks,
As flowing leſs from choice, than your command:
But ſince the *Roman* pride will find account
In my perſiſting ſtill; and *Philip* ſuffer;
I quit the lofty thought on which I ſtood,
And yield to your requeſt.

KING.

Indulgent gods!
Bleſt moment! How will this with tranſport fill
The doubtful *Perſeus*, after years of pain?

DYMAS.

My lord, I've heard what paſt, and give you joy
Of *Perſeus'* nuptials, which your ſtate requires:
But for *Demetrius'*—think of thoſe no more.
Far from accepting ſuch a load of glory,

I bring,

I bring, I bring, my lord, this forfeit head
Due to my bold refuſal.

KING.

Dares the boy
Fall from his promiſe; and impoſe on thee
Forc'd diſobedience to my royal pleaſure?

DYMAS.

No, my moſt honour'd lord, there, there's my crime:
Fond of the maid, with ardour he preſs'd on;
But ſhould I dare pollute his blood with mine?
But you, Sir, authorize it—ſtill more baſe,
To wrong a maſter ſo profuſely kind.

KING.

That man is noble on whom *Philip* ſmiles.
Come, come, there's ſomething more in this—explain.

DYMAS.

Why am I forc'd on this ungrateful office?
Yet can't I tell you more than fame has told;
Which ſays *Demetrius* is in league with *Rome*.
Why weds ambition then an humble maid,
But to gain me to treaſon? What then follows?
They'll ſay the ſubtile ſtateſman plann'd this marriage,
To raiſe his blood into his maſter's throne.
No, Sir, preſerve my fame; let life ſuffice.

Enter PERICLES.

PERICLES.

Sir, you rambaſſador's arriv'd from *Rome*———

[*Preſents a letter.*

KING.

Ha! I muſt read it—this will tell me more.

[*After reading it.*

O princeſs! now our only comfort flows
From your indulgence to my better ſon.
This dreadful news precipitates my wiſh,
To keep rapacious *Rome*, from ſeizing *Thrace*.
You cannot wed too ſoon: My fair ally!
What if you bleſs me, and my ſon, to-morrow?

ERIXENE.

Since you requeſt, and your affairs demand it,
Without a bluſh—I think I may comply.

KING.

O daughter! but no more—The gods will thank you!
I go to bleſs my *Perſeus* with the news.

DYMAS.

Thus the boy's dead in empire, and in Love.

[*Exeunt* King, Dymas, *&c.*

ERIXENE.

I triumph! I'm reveng'd! I reign! I reign!
Nor thank *Demetrius*' treaſon for a crown.
Love is our own cauſe, honour is the gods.
I can be glorious without happineſs;
But without glory never can be bleſt.———

DELIA.

'Tis well; but can you wed the man you ſcorn?

ERIXENE.

Wed any thing, for vengeance on the perjur'd.
I'll now inſult him from an higher ſphere:
This unexpected turn may gall his pride.
Whate'er has pangs for him, has charms for me.

DELIA.

A rooted love is ſcarce ſo ſoon remov'd.

ERIXENE.

If not, the greater virtue to controul it;
And ſtrike at his heart, tho' 'tis through my own.

DE-

DELIA.

I can't but praiſe this triumph; yet I dread
The combat ſtill. And ſee, the foe draws near.

Enter DEMETRIUS.

DEMETRIUS.

Erixene!

ERIXENE.

My lord!

DEMETRIUS.

My pale cheek ſpeaks,
My trembling limbs prevent my faltering tongue,
And aſk you———

ERIXENE.

What, my lord?

DEMETRIUS.

My Lord?—Her eyes
Confirm it true, and yet, without a crime,
I can't believe it. O *Erixene*———

ERIXENE.

I gueſs your meaning, Sir, but am ſurpriz'd
That *Dymas'* ſon ſhould think of aught I do.

DEMETRIUS.

Falſe are my ſenſes! falſe both ear and eye!
All, all be rather falſe than her I love!

ERIXENE.

She paſt not, Sir, this way.

DEMETRIUS.

Is then my pain
Your ſport? and can *Erixene* pretend
Herſelf deceiv'd, by what deceiv'd the king?
An artifice made uſe of for your ſake:
A proof, not violation, of my love.

ERIX-

ERIXENE.

I thought not of your love, nor artifice:
Both were forgot; or, rather, never known.
But without artifice I tell you this;
Your brother lays his ſceptre at my feet,
And whoſe example bids my heart reſiſt
The charms of empire?

DEMETRIUS.

This is woman's ſkill:
You ceaſe to love, and from my conduct ſtrive
To labour an excuſe. For if indeed
You thought me falſe, had you been thus ſerene,
Calm, and unruffled? No; my heart ſays, no.
Paſſions, if great, tho' turn'd to their reverſe,
Keep their degree, and are great paſſions ſtill.
And ſhe who, when ſhe thinks her lover falſe,
Retains her temper, never loſt her heart.

ERIXENE.

That I'm ſerene, ſays not I never lov'd.
Indeed the vulgar float as paſſion drives;
But noble minds have reaſon for their queen.
While you deſerv'd, my paſſion was ſincere;
You change, my paſſion dies. But, pardon, Sir,
If my vain mind thinks anger is too much:
Take my neglect, I can afford no more.

DEMETRIUS.

No rage! flame! thunder! give a thouſand deaths!
Oh! reſcue me from this more dreadful calm!
This curſt indifference! which like a froſt
In northern ſeas, outdoes the fierceſt ſtorm.
Commanded by my father to comply,
I feign'd obedience:—Had I then refus'd———

ERIX-

ERIXENE.

I grant the conſequence had been moſt dreadful!
I grant that *Dymas'* daughter had been angry.

DEMETRIUS.

Aſk *Dymas* with what rage———

ERIXENE.

You well might rage,
To be refus'd.

DEMETRIUS.

Refus'd?

ERIXENE.

He told your ſecret;
The king, and I, and all the court can witneſs.

DEMETRIUS.

Refus'd! falſe villain! O the perjur'd ſlave!
Hell-born impoſtor! Madam, 'tis moſt falſe!
Warm from my heart is every word I ſpeak!
The villain lies! Believe the pangs that rend me;
Believe the witneſs ſtreaming from my eyes,
And let me ſpeak no more.

ERIXENE.

I do believe
Your grief ſincere. I've heard the maid is fair.

DEMETRIUS.

Proceed; and thus *indeed* commit that crime
You falſely charge on me. The crown has charm'd you.
How warm this morning did you preſs my flight?
The cauſe is plain: An out-rag'd lover's groan,
And dying agony, moleſt our ear,
And hurt the muſic of a nuptial ſong.

ERIXENE.

Since your *inconſtancy* perſiſts to charge
Its crime on my *ambition*, I'll be kind,

And

And leave you in poſſeſſion of an error,
Of which you ſeem ſo fond.

DEMETRIUS.

Ah! ſtay one moment!

Enter PERSEUS *and* PERICLES.

PERSEUS.

Erixene!

DEMETRIUS.

Diſtraction! [*Starting.*]

ERIXENE.

'Tis well tim'd.
My lord, your brother doubts if I'm ſincere,
And thinks (an error natural to him)
I'll break my vow to you.—You'll clear my fame,
And labour to convince him, that to-morrow,
Erixene's at once, a bride, and queen.

[*Exit* Erixene.

PERSEUS.

When I have work'd him up to violence,
Bring thou the king, and pity my diſtreſs.

[*To* Pericles, *who goes out.*

DEMETRIUS.

On what Extremes extreme diſtreſs impels me?
In things impoſſible I put my truſt;
I, in my only brother, find a foe;
Yet in my rival, hope the greateſt friend.
When all our hopes are lodg'd in ſuch expedients,
'Tis as if poiſon were our only food;
And death was call'd on as the guard of life.

PERSEUS.

Why doſt thou droop?

DEME-

DEMETRIUS.

Becauſe I'm dead; quite dead
To hope; and yet rebellious to deſpair;
Like ghoſts unbleſs'd, that burſt the bars of death.
Strange is my conduct?—Stranger my diſtreſs;
Beyond example both! Whoe'er before me
Preſs'd his worſt foe, to prove his trueſt friend?
But tho' thou'rt *not* my Brother, thou'rt a *Man*;
And, if a man, compaſſionate the worſt
That man can feel; tho' found that worſt in me.

PERSEUS.

What wouldſt?

DEMETRIUS.

Unclinch thy talons from thy prey;
Let the dove fly to *this* her neſt again. [*Striking his*
For, oh! the maid's unalienably mine, *breaſt.*
Tho' now thro' rage run mad, and turn'd to thee.
How often have I languiſh'd at her feet?
Baſk'd in her eye, and revell'd in her ſmile?
How often, as ſhe liſten'd to my vows,
Trembling and pale with agonies of joy,
Have I left earth, and mounted to the ſtars?

PERSEUS.

There *Dymas'* daughter ſhone above the reſt,
Illuſtrious in thy ſight.

DEMETRIUS.

Thy taunt, how falſe?——
I no leſs preſs your int'reſt than my own.
Think you 'tis poſſible her heart ſo long
Inclin'd to me, the price of all my vows,
Purchas'd by tears and groans, and paid me down
In tendereſt returns of love divine,
Can in one day be yours?——Impoſſible!

PER-

PERSEUS.

If I'm deceiv'd, I'm pleas'd with the deceit.
How my heart dances in the golden dream!
In pity do not wake me till to-morrow.

DEMETRIUS.

Then thou'lt awake diſtracted.—Truſt me, brother?
She gives her hand alone.

PERSEUS.

Nor need I more;
That hand's enough that brings a ſceptre in it.
I ſcorn the prince who weds with meaner views.
Her duty's mine, and I conceive ſmall pain
From your ſweet error, that her love is yours.
I'm pleas'd ſuch cordial thoughts of your own merit
Support you in diſtreſs.

DEMETRIUS.

Inhuman *Perſeus*.
If pity dwells within the heart of man,
If due that pity to the laſt diſtreſs,
Pity a lover exquiſitely pain'd;
A lover exquiſitely pain'd by you.
Oh! in the name of all the gods, relent!
Give me my princeſs! give her to my throes!
Amidſt a thouſand *you* may chuſe a Love;
The ſpacious earth contains but one for *me*.——
But oh! I rave: Art thou not he, the man
Who drinks my groans like muſick at his ear?
And wou'd as wine, as nectar, drink my blood?
Are all my hopes of mercy lodg'd in thee?
O rigid gods! and ſhall I then fall down!
Embrace thy feet, and bathe them with my tears?
Yes, I will drown thee with my tears, my blood,

So

So thou afford a human ear to pangs,
A brother's pangs, a brother's broken heart.

PERSEUS.

Pardon, *Demetrius*, but the princeſs calls,
And I am bound to go.

DEMETRIUS.

O ſtay. [*Laying hold of him.*

PERSEUS.

You tremble.

DEMETRIUS.

The princeſs calls, and you are bound to go?

PERSEUS.

E'en ſo.

DEMETRIUS.

What princeſs.

PERSEUS.

Mine.

DEMETRIUS.

'Tis falſe.

PERSEUS.

Unhand me.

DEMETRIUS.

What, ſee, talk, touch, nay taſte her; like a bee
Draw honey from her wounded lip, while I
Am ſtung to death!

PERSEUS.

The triumph once was your's.

DEMETRIUS.

Rip up my breaſt, or you ſhall never ſtir.
My heart may viſit her! O! take it with you.
Have I not ſeen her, where ſhe has not been?
Have I not claſp'd her ſhadow? Trod her ſteps?
Tranſported trod! as if they led to heaven!

Each morn my life I lighted at her eye,
And, ev'ry evening, at its cloſe, expir'd.——— [*Burſts into tears.*

PERSEUS.

Fie! thou'rt a *Roman*; can a *Roman* weep?
Sure *Alexander*'s helmet can ſuſtain
Far heavier ſtrokes than theſe. For ſhame, *Demetrius*,
E'en ſnatch up the next *Sabin* in thy way
'Twill do as well. [*Going.*

DEMETRIUS.

By heaven you ſhall not ſtir.
Long as I live, I ſtand a world between you,
And keep you diſtant as the poles aſunder.
Who takes my love, in mercy takes my life;
Thy bloody paſs cleave thro' thy brother's breaſt.
I beg, I challenge, I provoke my death. [*His hand upon his ſword.*

Enter KING *and* DYMAS.

PERSEUS.

You will not murder me?

DEMETRIUS.

Yes, you and all.

KING.

How like a tyger foaming o'er his prey!——

PERSEUS.

Now, Sir, believe your eye, believe your ear,
And ſtill believe me perjur'd, as this morning.

KING.

Heav'n's wrath's exhauſted, there's no more to fear,
My darling ſon found criminal in all.

DEMETRIUS.

That villain there to blaſt me! Yes, I'll ſpeak;
For what have I to fear, who feel the worſt?

'Tis

'Tis time the truth were known. That villain, Sir,
Has cleft my heart, and laughs to ſee it bleed;
But his confeſſion ſhall redeem my fame,
And re-inthrone me in my princeſs' ſmile;
Or I'll return that falſe embrace he gave me,
And ſtab him in your ſight.

KING.

Hold, inſolent!
Where's your reſpect to me?

DEMETRIUS.

O royal Sir!
That has undone me. Thro' reſpect I gave
A feign'd conſent, which his black artifice
Has turn'd to my deſtruction. I refus'd
That ſlave's, that curſed ſlave's, that ſtateſman's daugh-
And he pretends ſhe was refus'd by me. (ter,
Hence, hence, this deſolation. Nought I fear,
Tho' nature groan her laſt. And ſhall *he* then
Eſcape and triumph?

KING.

Guards there! ſeize the prince!
The man you menace you ſhall learn to fear.

[*He is ſeiz'd.*

DYMAS.

Hold, Sir! not this for me! It is your ſon:
What is my life, tho' pour'd upon your feet?

KING.

Is *this* a ſon?

DEMETRIUS.

No, Sir; my crime's too great,
Which dares to vindicate a father's honour,
To catch the glories of a falling crown,

And ſave it from pollution. But I've done.
I die, unleſs my princeſs is reſtor'd; [*Pointing to* Dym.
And if I die, by heav'n and earth, and hell!
His ſordid blood ſhall mingle with the duſt;
And ſee if thence 'twill mount into the throne.
O, Sir! think of it! I'll expect my fate. [*Exit* Dem.

KING.

And thou ſhalt have it.

DYMAS.

How, my lord; in tears!

KING.

As if the gods came down in evidence!
How many ſudden rays of proof concur
To my conviction? Was ever equal boldneſs?
But 'tis no wonder from a brother-king;
[*Produces the forg'd letter.*
This king of *Thrace*—To-morrow he'll be king
Of *Macedon*——He therefore dies to-night.

PERSEUS. [*Aſide to* Dymas.]

And yet I doubt it; for I know his fondneſs.
Thou practiſe well the leſſon I have taught thee,
While I put on a ſolemn face of woe,
Afflicted for a brother's early fall.———
Heaven knows with what regret.——But, Sir, your
ſafety—[*Preſenting the mandate for* Demetrius's *death.*

KING.

What giv'ſt thou here?

DYMAS.

Your paſſport to renown.
You ſign your apotheoſis in that.
What ſcales the ſkies, but zeal for public good?

PERSEUS.

How god-like mercy?

DY-

DYMAS.

Mercy to mankind,
By treaſon aw'd.

KING. [*To* Perſeus.]

Muſt then thy brother bleed?

[Dymas *ſeeming at a loſs*, Perſeus *whiſpers him, and gives a letter.*

DYMAS. [*Looking on the letter.*]

No, Sir; the king of *Thrace.*

KING.

Why that is true——
Yet who, if not a father, ſhould forgive?

DYMAS.

Who, Sir, if not a *Philip*, ſhould be juſt?

KING. [*To* Dymas.]

Is't not my ſon?

DYMAS.

If not, far leſs his guilt.

KING. [*To* Perſeus.]

Is't not my other *Perſeus?*

PERSEUS.

Sir, I thank you;
That ſeeks your crown, and life.

KING.

And *life?*

DYMAS.

No, Sir;
He'll only take your *crown*; you ſtill may live.

KING.

Heav'n blaſt thee for that thought!

PERSEUS.

Why ſhakes my father?

KING.

It ſtabs, it gnaws, it harrows up my ſoul.

Is he not young? Was he not much indulg'd?
Gall'd by his brother? Doubted by his father?
Tempted by *Rome?* A nation to a boy?

DYMAS.

O a mere infant!——that depoſes kings.

KING.

No; once he ſav'd my crown.

DYMAS.

And now would wear it.

KING.

How my head ſwims!

PERSEUS.

Nor ſtrange; the taſk is hard.

DYMAS.

Yet ſcarce for him. *Brutus* was but a *Roman:*
[*Speaking as if he would not have the king hear.*
Yet like a *Philip* dar'd; and is immortal.

KING.

I hear thee, *Dymas*; give me then the mandate.
[*Going to ſign, he ſtops ſhort.*

DYMAS.

No wonder if his *mother* thus had paus'd.

PERSEUS. [*Aſide.*]

Rank cankers on thy tongue; why mention her?

KING.

O gods! I ſee her now; what am I doing?
[*Throws away the ſtyle.*
I ſee her dying eye let fall a tear
In favour of *Demetrius.*——Shall I ſtab
Her lovely image ſtampt on every feature?

DYMAS.

His *ſoul* eſcap'd it, Sir.

KING.

Thou ly'ſt; begone.

[Perſeus *and* Dymas *in great confuſion:* Perſeus *whiſpers* Dymas.

DY-

DYMAS. [*Aſide to* Perſeus.]
True; that, or nought, will touch him.
If, Sir, your mercy—— [*To the king.*

PERSEUS.
O ſpeak on of mercy;
Mercy, the darling attribute of heav'n.

DYMAS.
If you *ſhould* ſpare him——

KING.
What if I *ſhould* ſpare him?

DYMAS.
I dare not ſay—Your wrath again might riſe.

KING.
Yes, if thou'rt ſilent—What if I *ſhould* ſpare him?

DYMAS.
Why if you *ſhould*—proud *Rome* would thank you for it.

KING.
Rome!—Her applauſe more ſhocks me than his death.
O thou, death's orator! dread advocate
For bowelleſs ſeverity! aſſiſt
My trembling hand, as thou haſt ſteel'd my heart;
And if it is guilt in me, ſhare the guilt.
He's dead. [*Signs.*] And if I blot it with one tear,
Perſeus, tho' leſs affected, will forgive me.

PERSEUS.
Forgive! Sir, I applaud, and wiſh my ſorrow
Was mild enough to weep.

[*The* King *going out, meets* Demetrius *in mourning, introduced by* Antigonus. *The* King *ſtarts back, and drops on* Dymas. *Recovering, ſpeaks.*

KING.
This, Fate, is thy tenth wave, and quite o'erwhelms me.
It leſs had ſhock'd me, had I met his ghoſt.
This is a plot to ſentence *me* to death.——

What haſt thou done, my mortal foe! thrown bars
[*To* Antigonus.
Athwart my glory? but thy ſcheme ſhall fail.
As ruſhing torrents ſweep th' obſtructing mound,
So *Philip* meets this mountain in his way,
Yet keeps his purpoſe ſtill.

[Perſeus *and* Pericles *whiſper aſide.*

PERICLES.

I can't but fear it.

PERSEUS.

I grant the danger great; yet don't deſpair:
Jove is againſt thee, *Perſeus* on thy ſide.

ANTIGONUS.

The prince, dread Sir, low on his bended knee——

KING.

This way, *Antigonus.*—Do'ſt mark his bloom?
Grace in his aſpect, grandeur in his mien?

ANTIGONUS.

I do.

KING.

'Tis falſe; take a king's word.—He's dead.—
That darling of my ſoul would ſtab me ſleeping.
How dar'ſt *thou* ſtart? Art thou the traitor's father?
If thou art pale, what is enough for me?——
How his grave yawns: Oh! that it was my own.

ANTIGONUS.

Mourn not the guilty.

KING.

No; he's innocent:
Death pays his debt to juſtice; and that done,
I grant him ſtill my ſon; as ſuch I love him:
Yes, and will claſp him to my breaſt, while yet
His clay is warm, nor moulders at my touch.

PER-

PERSEUS. [*Aſide.*]

A curſe on that embrace.

DYMAS.

Nay worſe; he weeps.

KING.

Poor boy, be not deceiv'd by my compaſſion;
My tears are cruel, and I groan thy death.

DEMETRIUS.

And am I then to die? If death's decreed,
Stab me yourſelf, nor give me to the knife
Of midnight ruffians, that have forg'd my crimes.
For you I beg, for you I pour my tears;
You are deceiv'd, diſhonour'd; I am only ſlain.
Oh! Father———

KING.

Father?—There's no father here;
Forbear to wound me with that tender name;
Nor raiſe all nature up in arms againſt me.

DEMETRIUS.

My Father! Guardian! Friend! nay, Deity!
What leſs than gods give being, life, and death!
My dying mother——

KING.

Hold thy peace, I charge thee.

DEMETRIUS.

Preſſing your hand, and bathing it with tears,
Bequeath'd your tenderneſs for her, to me;
And, low on earth, my legacy I claim,
Claſping your knee, tho' baniſh'd from your breaſt.

KING.

My knees!—Would that were all; he graſps my heart.
Perſeus, canſt thou ſtand by and ſee me ruin'd?

[*Reaching his hand to* Perſeus.

PERSEUS.

Looſe, looſe thy hold.—It is *my* father too.

KING.

Yes, *Macedon*, and thine, and I'll preſerve thee.

DEMETRIUS.

Who once before preſerv'd it from the *Thracian?*
And who, at *Thraſimene*, turn'd the lifted bolt
From *Philip*'s hoary brow?

KING.

I'll hear no more.
O *Perſeus! Dymas! Pericles!* aſſiſt me,
Unbind me, diſinchant me, break this charm
Of *Nature*, that accomplice with my foes;
Rend me, O rend me, from the friend of *Rome.*

PERSEUS.

Nay *then*, howe'er reluctant, aid I *muſt.*
The friend of *Rome?*—*That* ſevers you for ever;
Tho' moſt incorporate and ſtrongly knit;
As lightning rends the knotted oak aſunder.

DEMETRIUS.

In ſpite of lightning, I renew the tie;
And ſtubborn is the graſp of dying men.
Who's he that ſhall divide me from myſelf?

[Demetrius *is forc'd from the* King's *knees, on which, ſtarting up, he flings his arms round his father.*

Still of a piece with him from whom I grew,
I'll bleed on my aſylum, dart my ſoul
In this embrace, and *thus* my treaſon crown.

KING.

Who love yourſelves, or *Macedon*, or me,
From the curs'd * *Eagle*'s talons wrench my crown;

* The *Roman* enſign.

And

And this barb'd arrow from my breaſt—'Tis done;
[*Forc'd aſunder.*
And the blood guſhes after it.——I faint.

DYMAS.

Support the king.

PERSEUS.

While treaſon licks the duſt.
[*Pointing at* Demetrius, *fallen in the ſtruggle.*

DYMAS.

A field well fought.

PERSEUS.

And juſtice has prevail'd.

KING.

O that the traitor could conceal the ſon!
Farewel, once beſt belov'd! ſtill moſt deplor'd!
He, he who dooms thee, bleeds upon thy tomb.
[*Exit* King.

DEMETRIUS.

Proſtrate on thee, my mother earth, be thou
Kinder than brother, or than father; open
And ſave me in thy boſom from my——*Friends:*
Friends, ſworn to waſh their hands in guiltleſs tears,
And quench infernal thirſt in kindred blood;
As if relation ſever'd human hearts,
Or that deſtruction was the child of love.

PERSEUS.

Farewel, young traitor; if they aſk below,
Who ſent thee beardleſs down, ſay, *Honeſt Perſeus:*
Whom reaſon ſways, not inſtinct; who can ſtrike
At horrid parricide, and flagrant treaſon,
Tho' thro' a boſom dearer than his own.
Think'ſt thou my tender heart can hate a brother?
The gods and *Perſeus* war with nought but guilt.

But I muſt go. What, Sir, your laſt commands
To your *Erixene?* She chides my ſtay. [*Exit* Perſ.

DEMETRIUS.

Without that token of a brother's love,
He could not part; my death was not enough.
I came for mercy, and I find it here:
And death is mercy, ſince my love is loſt.
Alas! my father too; my heart achs for him:
And *Perſeus*,—fain would I forgive e'en thee:
But *Philip*'s ſufferings cry too loud againſt it.
Blind author, and ſure mourner of my death!
Father moſt dear! what pangs haſt thou to come?
Like that poor wretch is thy unhappy doom,
Who, while in ſleep his fever'd fancy glows,
Draws his keen ſword, and ſheaths it in his foes;
But, waking, ſtarts upright, in wild ſurprize,
To feel warm blood glide round him as he lies;
To ſee his reeking hands in crimſon dy'd,
And a pale corſe extended by his ſide:
He views, with horror, what mad dreams have done,
And ſinks, heart-broken, on a murder'd ſon.

End of the FOURTH ACT.

ACT

ACT V.

SCENE I.

KING, POSTHUMIUS, *meeting.*

POSTHUMIUS.

WE, in behalf of our allies, O King!
Call'd on thee yeſterday, to clear thy glory;
Nor wonder now that *Philip* is unjuſt
To ſtrangers, who has murder'd his own ſon.

KING.

'Tis falſe.

POSTHUMIUS.

No thanks to *Philip* that he fled.

KING.

A traitor is no ſon.

POSTHUMIUS.

Heav'n's vengeance on me,
If he refus'd not yeſterday thy crown,
Tho' Life and Love both brib'd him to comply.

KING.

See there. [*Gives the letter.*

POSTHUMIUS.

'Tis not the conſul's hand, or ſeal.

KING.

You're his accomplices.

POSTHUMIUS.

We're his avengers.
'Tis war.

KING.

KING.

Eternal war.

POSTHUMIUS.

Next time we meet——

KING.

Is in the *Capitol*.—Haſte, fly my kingdom.

POSTHUMIUS.

No longer *thine*.

KING.

Yes, and proud *Rome* a province.

[*Exit* Poſthumius, *&c.*

They brave, they make, they tyrannize o'er kings.
The name of king the proſtrate world ador'd,
Ere *Romulus* had call'd his *thieves* together.——
But let me pauſe.—Not *Quintius'* hand, or ſeal?—
Doubt and impatience, like thick ſmoke and fire,
Cloud and torment my reaſon.

ANTIGONUS.

Sir, recall,
And re-examine thoſe you ſent to *Rome*:
You took their evidence in haſte and anger.
Torture, if they refuſe, will tell the truth.

KING.

Go, ſtop the nuptials, till you hear from me.

[*Exit* King *and* Antigonus.

ERIXENE *and* DELIA *meeting*.

DELIA.

Madam, the prince, who fled from threaten'd death,
Attempting his eſcape to foreign realms,
Was lately taken at the city gates,
So ſtrongly guarded by his father's pow'rs;
And now, confin'd, expects his final doom.

ERIXENE.

Impriſon'd, and to die!—And let him die. Bid

Bid *Dymas'* daughter weep.—I half forgot
His perjur'd inſolence.—I'll go and glut
My vengeance. O how juſt a traitor's death!
And blacker ſtill, a traitor to my love.

[*Exeunt* Erixene *and* Delia.

Scene draws, and ſhews Demetrius *in priſon.*

DEMETRIUS.

Thou ſubterranean ſepulchre of peace!
Thou home of horror! hideous neſt of crimes!
Guilt's firſt ſad ſtage in her dark road to hell!
Ye thick-barr'd ſunleſs paſſages for air,
To keep alive the wretch that longs to die!
Ye low-brow'd arches, thro' whoſe ſullen gloom,
Reſound the ceaſleſs groans of pale deſpair!
Ye dreadful ſhambles, cak'd with *human* blood!
Receive a gueſt, from far, far other ſcenes,
From pompous courts, from ſhouting victories,
Carouſing feſtivals, harmonious bow'rs,
And the ſoft *Chains* of heart-diſſolving love.
Oh! how unlike to *theſe?* heart-breaking load
Of ſhame eternal, ne'er to be knock'd off,
O welcome death, no, never but by thee.———
Nor has a foe done this.—A friend! A father!
O that I could have dy'd without their guilt.——

[*Enter* Erixene, Demetrius *gazing at her.*]

So look'd in chaos the firſt beam of light:
How drives the ſtrong enchantment of her eye
All horror hence?—How die the thoughts of death?

ERIXENE.

I knew not my own heart. I cannot bear it.

Shame

Shame chides me back; for to inſult his woes
Is too ſevere; and to condole, too kind. [*Going.*

DEMETRIUS.

Thus I arreſt you in the name of mercy.
And dare compel your ſtay: Is then one look,
One word, one moment, a laſt moment too,
When I ſtand tottering on the brink of death,
A cruel ignominious death, too much
For one that loves like me? A length of years
You may devote to my bleſt rival's arms;
I aſk but one ſhort moment. O permit,
Permit the Dying to lay claim to thee,
To thee, thou dear equivalent for life.——
Cruel, relentleſs, marble-hearted maid!

ERIXENE.

Demetrius, you perſiſt to do me wrong;
For, know, tho' I behold thee as thou art,
Doubly a traitor, to the State and me;
Thy ſorrow, thy diſtreſs have touch'd my boſom;
I own it is a fault; I pity thee.

Enter OFFICER.

OFFICER.

My lord, your time is ſhort, and death waits for you.

ERIXENE.

Death?—I forgive thee from my inmoſt ſoul.

DEMETRIUS.

Forgive me? Oh! thou need'ſt not to forgive;
If impoſition had not ſtruck thee blind.
Truth lies in ambuſh yet, but will ſtart up,
And ſeize thy trembling ſoul, when mine is fled.
O I've a thouſand, thouſand things to ſay.

ERIX-

ERIXENE.

And I am come a ſecret to diſcloſe,
That might awake thee wer't thou dead already.

OFFICER.

My Lord, your final moment is expir'd.

DEMETRIUS *and* ERIXENE.

One, one ſhort moment more.

DEMETRIUS.

No; death lets fall
The curtain, and divides our loves for ever.
[*Is forc'd out.*

ERIXENE.

Oh I've a darker dungeon in my ſoul,
Nor want an executioner to kill me.
What revolutions in the human heart
Will pity cauſe? What horrid deeds revenge? [*Exit.*

Scene ſhuts. Enter ANTIGONUS, *with attendants.*

ANTIGONUS.

How diſtant virtue dwells from mortal man?
Was't not that each man calls for other's virtue,
Her very name on earth would be forgot,
And leave the tongue, as it has left the heart.
Was ever ſuch a labour'd plan of guilt?
Take the king's mandate, to the priſon fly,
Throw wide the gates, and let *Demetrius* know,
The full detail.
[*Enter* Erixene.
The princeſs! ha! be gone; [*To the attendant.*
While I ſtir up an equal tranſport here.
Princeſs, I ſee your griefs, and judge the cauſe:
But I bring news might raiſe you from the grave;
Or call you down from heaven to hear with joy.

Juſt

Juſt gods! the virtuous will at laſt prevail.
On motives here too tedious to relate,
I begg'd the king, to re-examine thoſe,
Who came from *Rome*. The king approv'd my counſel.
Surpriz'd, and conſcious, in their charge they falter'd,
And threaten'd tortures ſoon diſcover'd all:
That *Perſeus* brib'd them to their perjuries;
That *Quintius'* letter was a forgery;
That prince *Demetrius'* intercourſe with *Rome*
Was innocent of treaſon to the State.

ERIXENE.

O my ſwoln heart! What will the gods do with me?

ANTIGONUS.

And to confirm this moſt ſurprizing news,
Dymas, who, ſtriving to ſuppreſs a tumult,
The rumour of *Demetrius'* flight had rais'd,
Was wounded ſore, with his laſt breath confeſs'd,
The prince refus'd his daughter; which affront
Inflam'd the ſtateſman to his prince's ruin.

ERIXENE.

Did he refuſe her? [*Swoons.*

ANTIGONUS.

Quite o'ercome with joy!
Tranſported out of life!—The gods reſtore her!

ERIXENE.

Ah! why recall me? This is a new kind
Of murder; moſt ſevere! that dooms to *life*.

ANTIGONUS.

Fair princeſs, you confound me.

ERIXENE.

Am I fair?
Am I a princeſs? Love and Empire mine?
Gay, gorgeous viſions dancing in my ſight!

No,

No, here I ſtand a naked ſhipwreck'd wretch,
Cold, trembling, pale, ſpent, helpleſs, hopeleſs, mad.
Caſt on a ſhore as cruel as the waves,
O'er-hung with rugged rocks, too ſteep to climb;
The mountain billows loud, come foaming in
Tremendous; and confound, ere they devour.

ANTIGONUS.

Madam, the king abſolves you from your vow.

ERIXENE.

For me, it matters not; but oh! the prince——
When he had ſhot the gulph of his deſpair;
Emerging into all the light of heav'n,
His heart high beating, with well-grounded hope;
Then to make ſhipwreck of his happineſs,
Like a poor wretch that has eſcap'd the ſtorm,
And ſwam to what he deems an happy iſle,
When, lo! the ſavage natives drink his blood.
Ah! why is vengeance ſweet to woman's pride,
As rapture to her love? It has undone me.

DELIA.

Madam, he comes.

ERIXENE.

Leave us, *Antigonus.*

ANTIGONUS.

What dreadful ſecret this?—But I'll obey,
Invoke the gods, and leave the reſt to fate. [*Exit* Ant.

ERIXENE.

How *terribly* triumphant comes the wretch!
He comes, like flowers ambroſial, early born,
To meet the blaſt, and periſh in the ſtorm.

Enter DEMETRIUS.

DEMETRIUS.

After an age of abſence in one hour,

Have

Have I then found thee, thou celeſtial maid!
Like a fair *Venus* in a ſtormy ſea;
Or a bright goddeſs, thro' the ſhades of night,
Dropt from the ſtars, to theſe bleſt arms again?
How exquiſite is pleaſure after pain?
Why throbs my heart ſo turbulently ſtrong,
Pain'd at thy preſence, thro' redundant joy,
Like a poor miſer, beggar'd by his ſtore?

ERIXENE.

Demetrius, joy and ſorrow dwell too near.

DEMETRIUS.

Talk not of ſorrow, leſt the gods reſent
As under-priz'd ſo loud a call to joy.
I live, I love, am lov'd, I have her here!
Rapture in preſent, and in proſpect, more!
No rival, no deſtroyer, no deſpair;
For jealouſies, for partings, groans, and death,
A train of joys, the gods alone can name!
When heav'n deſcends in bleſſings ſo profuſe,
So ſudden, ſo ſurpaſſing hope's extreme,
Like the ſun burſting from the midnight gloom,
'Tis impious to be niggards in delight;
Joy becomes duty; heav'n *calls* for ſome exceſs,
And tranſport flames as incenſe to the ſkies.

ERIXENE.

Tranſport how dreadful!

DEMETRIUS.

Turns *Erixene*?
Can ſhe not bear the ſun-ſhine of our fate?
Meridian happineſs is pour'd around us;
The laughing loves deſcend in ſwarms upon us,
And where we tread is an eternal ſpring.

By

By heav'n, I almoſt pity guilty *Perſeus*
For ſuch a loſs.

ERIXENE.

That ſtabs me thro' and thro'!

DEMETRIUS.

What ſtabs thee?—Speak.—Have I then loſt thy love?

ERIXENE.

To my confuſion, be it ſpoke.——'Tis thine.

DEMETRIUS.

To thy confuſion? Is it then a crime?
You heard how dying *Dymas* clear'd my fame.

ERIXENE.

I heard, and trembled; heard, and ran diſtracted.

DEMETRIUS.

Aſtoniſhment!

ERIXENE.

I've nothing elſe to give thee.

[*He ſteps back in aſtoniſhment; ſhe in agony; and both are ſilent for ſome time.*

He is ſtruck dumb.—Nor can I ſpeak.—Yet muſt I.
I tremble on the brink; yet muſt plunge in——
Know, my *Demetrius!* joys are for the gods;
Man's common courſe of nature is diſtreſs:
His joys are prodigies; and like them too,
Portend approaching ill. The wiſe man ſtarts,
And trembles at the *perils* of a bliſs.
To hope, how bold? How daring to be fond;
When, what our fondneſs graſps, is not immortal.——
I will preſume on thy known, ſteady virtue,
And treat thee like a man; I will, *Demetrius!*
Nor longer in my boſom hide a brand,
That burns unſeen, and drinks my vital blood.

DEMETRIUS.

What myſtery? [*Here, a ſecond* pauſe *in both.*

ERIX-

ERIXENE.

The blackeſt.

DEMETRIUS.

How every terror doubles in the dark?
Why muffled up in ſilence ſtands my fate?
This horrid ſpectre let me ſee at once,
And ſhew if I'm a man.

ERIXENE.

It calls for more.

DEMETRIUS.

It calls for *me* then, Love has made me *more*.

ERIXENE.

O fortify thy ſoul with more than love; (thee.
To hear, what heard, thou'lt curſe the tongue that tells

DEMETRIUS.

Curſe whom? curſe thee!

ERIXENE.

Yes, from thy inmoſt ſoul.
Why doſt thou lift thine eyes and hands to heav'n?
The pow'rs moſt conſcious of this deed, reſide
In darkneſs, howl below in raging fires,
Where pangs like mine corrode them.—Thence ariſe
Black gods of execration and deſpair!
Thro' dreadful earthquakes cleave your upward way,
While nature ſhakes, and vapours blot the ſun;
Then thro' thoſe horrors in loud groans proclaim,
That I am———

DEMETRIUS.

What?—I'll have it, tho' it blaſt me.

ERIXENE.

Thus then in thunder,——I am *Perſeus'* wife.

[Demetrius *falls againſt the ſcene. After a pauſe.*

DE-

DEMETRIUS.

In thunder?—No; *that* had not ſtruck ſo deep.
What tempeſt e'er diſcharg'd ſo fierce a fire?—
Calm and deliberate anguiſh feeds upon me;
Each thought ſent out for help brings in new woe.
Where ſhall I turn? where fly? to whom but thee?
[*Kneeling.*
Tremendous *Jove!* whom mortals will not know
From bleſſings, but *compel* to be ſevere,
I feel thy vengeance, and adore thy power;
I ſee my failings, and abſolve thy rage.
But, Oh! I muſt perceive the load that's on me;
I can't but tremble underneath the ſtroke.
Aid me to bear!—But ſince it can't be borne,
Oh let thy mercy burſt in flames upon me!
Thy triple bolt is healing balm to this?
This pain unfelt, unfancy'd by the wretch,
The groaning wretch, that on the wheel expires.

ERIXENE.

Why did I tell thee?

DEMETRIUS.

Why commit a deed
Too ſhocking to be told? What fumes of hell
Flew to thy brain? What fiend the crime inſpir'd?

ERIXENE.

Perſeus, laſt night, as ſoon as thou waſt fled,
At that dead hour, when good men are at reſt,
When every crime and horror is abroad, [ſcream;
Graves yawn, fiends yell, wolves howl, and ravens
Than ravens, wolves, or fiends more fatal far,
To me he came, and threw him at my feet,

And

And wept, and ſwore, unleſs I gave conſent
To call a prieſt that moment, all was ruin'd.
That the next day *Demetrius* and his powers
Might conquer, he loſe me, and I my crown,
Conferr'd by *Philip* but on *Perſeus'* wife.
I ſtarted, trembled, fainted; he invades
My half-recover'd ſtrength, brib'd prieſts conſpire,
All urge my vow, all ſeize my raviſh'd hand,
Invoke the gods, run o'er the haſty rite;
While each ill omen of the ſky flew o'er us,
And furies howl'd our nuptial ſong below.——
Can'ſt thou forgive?

DEMETRIUS.

By all the flames of love,
And torments of deſpair, I *never* can.
The furies toſs their torches from thy hand,
And all their adders hiſs around thy head!
I'll ſee thy face no more! *Going.*

ERIXENE.

Thy rage is juſt.
Yet ſtay and hear me. [*She kneels and holds him.*

DEMETRIUS.

I have heard too much.

ERIXENE.

'Till thou haſt heard the whole, O do not curſe me!

DEMETRIUS.

Where can I find a curſe to reach thy crime?

ERIXENE.

Mercy! [*Weeping.*

DEMETRIUS. [*Aſide.*

Her tears, like drops of molten lead,
With torment burn their paſſage to my heart.
And yet ſuch violation of her vows——

ERIX-

ERIXENE.

Mercy!

DEMETRIUS.

Perſeus— [*Stamping.*

ERIXENE.

Stamp till the centre ſhakes,
So black a Dæmon ſhalt thou never raiſe.
Perſeus? Can'ſt thou abhor him more than I?
Hell has its furies, *Perſeus* has his love,
And, oh! *Demetrius* his eternal hate.

DEMETRIUS.

Eternal? Yes, eternal and eternal;
As deep, and everlaſting, as my pain.

ERIXENE.

Some god deſcend and ſooth his ſoul to peace!

DEMETRIUS.

Talk'ſt *thou* of peace, what peace haſt thou beſtow'd?
A brain diſtracted, and a broken heart.
Talk'ſt *thou* of peace? Hark, hark thy huſband calls,
His father's rebel! Brother's murderer!
Nature's abhorrence, and—thy lawful Lord!
Fly, my kind patroneſs, and in his boſom
Conſult my peace.

ERIXENE.

I never ſhall be there.
My Lord! My Life!

DEMETRIUS.

How ſay'ſt? Is *Perſeus* here?——
Fly, fly! away, away! 'tis death! 'tis inceſt!
[*Starting wide, and looking round him.*
[*As he is going, ſhe lays hold of his robe.*
Dar'ſt thou to touch *Demetrius?* Dar'ſt thou touch him
Even with thine eye?

ERIX-

ERIXENE.

I dare—and more, dare ſeize,
And fix him here: No doubt to thy ſurprize.——
I'm blemiſh'd, not abandon'd; honour ſtill
Is ſacred in my ſight. Thou call'ſt it inceſt;
'Tis innocence, 'tis virtue; if there's virtue,
In fix'd, inviolable ſtrength of love.
For, know, the moment the dark deed was done,
The moment madneſs made me *Perſeus'* wife,
I ſeiz'd *this* friend, and lodg'd him in my boſom,
[*Shewing a dagger.*
Firmly reſolv'd I never would be more.
And now I fling me at thy feet, imploring
Thy ſteadier hand to guide him to my heart.
Who wed in vengeance, wed not but to die.

DEMETRIUS.

Has *Perſeus* then an hymeneal claim?
And no divorce, but death?—and death from me,
Who ſhould defend thee from the world in arms?
O thou ſtill excellent! ſtill moſt belov'd!

ERIXENE.

Life is the foe that parts us; death, a friend
All knots diſſolving, joins us; and for ever.
Why ſo diſorder'd? Wherefore ſhakes thy frame?
Look on me; do *I* tremble? Am *I* pale?
When I let looſe a ſigh, I'll pardon thine.
Take my example, and be bravely wretched;
True grandeur riſes from ſurmounted ills;
The wretched only can be truly great.
If not in kindneſs, yet in vengeance ſtrike;
'Tis not *Erixene*, 'tis *Perſeus'* wife.——
Thou'lt not reſign me?

De-

DEMETRIUS.

Not to *Jove.*

ERIXENE.

Then ſtrike.

DEMETRIUS. [*Gazing on her with aſtoniſhment.*]

How can I ſtrike? ſtab at the face of heav'n?
How can I ſtrike?—Yet how can I forbear?
I feel a thouſand deaths, debating one.
A deity ſtands guard on ev'ry charm,
And ſtrikes at me.

ERIXENE.

As will thy brother ſoon:
He's now in arms, and may be here this hour.
Nothing ſo cruel as too ſoft a ſoul;
This is ſtrange tenderneſs, that breaks my heart;
Strange tenderneſs, that dooms to *double* death——
To *Perſeus.*

DEMETRIUS.

True.—But *how* to ſhun that horror?
By wounding thee, whom ſavage pards would ſpare?
My heart's inhabitant! my ſoul's ambition!
By wounding thee, and bathing in thy blood;
That blood illuſtrious, thro' a radiant race
Of kings, and heroes, rolling down from gods?

ERIXENE.

Heroes and kings, and gods themſelves, muſt yield
To dire neceſſity.

DEMETRIUS.

Since that abſolves me,
Stand firm and fair.

ERIXENE.

My boſom meets the point,
Than *Perſeus* far more welcome to my breaſt.

DEMETRIUS.

Neceſſity, for gods themſelves too ſtrong,
Is weaker than thy charms. [*Drops the dagger.*

ERIXENE.

O my *Demetrius!*
[*Turns, and goes to the farther part of the ſtage.*

DEMETRIUS.

O my *Erixene!* [*Both ſilent, weep, and tremble.*

ERIXENE.

Farewel. [*Going.*

DEMETRIUS. [*Paſſionately ſeizing her.*
Where goeſt?

ERIXENE.

To ſeek a friend.

DEMETRIUS.

He's here.

ERIXENE.

Yes *Perſeus'* friend.——
Earth, open and receive me.

DEMETRIUS.

Heav'n ſtrike us dead,
And ſave me from a double ſuicide,
And one of tenfold death.—O *Jove!* O *Jove!*
[*Falling on his knees.*
But I'm diſtracted. [*Suddenly ſtarting up.*
What can *Jove?*—Why pray?
What can I pray for?

ERIXENE.

For a heart.

DEMETRIUS.

Yes, one
That cannot feel. Mine bleeds at every vein.

Who

Who never lov'd, ne'er ſuffer'd; he feels nothing,
Who nothing feels but for himſelf alone;
And when we feel for others, reaſon reels,
O'erloaded, from her path, and man runs mad.
As Love alone can exquiſitely bleſs,
Love only feels the *marvellous* of pain;
Opens new veins of torture in the ſoul,
And wakes the nerve where agonies are born:
E'en *Dymas*, *Perſeus* (hearts of adamant!),
Might weep theſe torments of their mortal foe.

ERIXENE.

Shall I be leſs compaſſionate than they?
[*Takes up the dagger.*
What love deny'd, thine agonies have done;
[*Stabs herſelf.*
Demetrius' ſigh outſtings the dart of death.

Enter the KING, *&c.*

KING.

Give me *Demetrius* to my arms; I call him
To life from death, to tranſport from deſpair.

DEMETRIUS.

See *Perſeus'* wife! [*Pointing at* Erixene] Let *Delia* tell (the reſt.

KING.

My grief-accuſtom'd heart can gueſs too well.

DEMETRIUS.

That ſigh turns all to guilt, but tears and death.

KING.

Death!—Who ſhall quell falſe *Perſeus* now in arms?
Who pour my tempeſt on the capitol?
How ſhall I ſweeten life to thy ſad ſpirit?——
I'll quit my throne this hour, and thou ſhalt reign.

DEMETRIUS.

You recommend that death you would diſſuade;

Ennobled thus by fame and empire loſt,
As well as life!—Small ſacrifice to Love.

[*Going to ſtab himſelf, the* King *runs to prevent it, but too late.*

KING.

Ah, hold! nor ſtrike thy dagger thro' my heart!

DEMETRIUS.

'Tis my firſt diſobedience, and my laſt. [*Falls down.*

KING.

There *Philip* fell! There *Macedon* expir'd!
I ſee the *Roman* eagle hovering o'er us,
And the ſhaft broke ſhould bring her to the ground.
[*Pointing to* Demetrius.

DEMETRIUS.

Hear, good *Antigonus!* my laſt requeſt:
Tell *Perſeus*, if he'll ſheath his impious ſword
Drawn on his father, I'll forgive him all;
Tho' poor *Erixene* lies bleeding by:
Her blood cries vengeance;—but my father's peace—
[*Dies.*

KING.

As much his goodneſs wounds me, as his death.
What then are both?—O *Philip*, once renown'd!
Where is the pride of *Greece*, the dread of *Rome*,
The theme of *Athens*, the wide world's example,
And the god *Alexander*'s rival, now?
E'en at the foot of fortune's precipice,
Where the ſlave's ſigh wafts *pity* to the *prince*,
And his *omnipotence* cries out for *more*.

ANTIGONUS.

As the ſwoln column of aſcending ſmoke,
So ſolid ſwells *thy* grandeur, pigmy man!

KING.

KING.

My life's deep tragedy was plann'd with art,
From ſcene to ſcene advancing in diſtreſs,
Thro' a ſad ſeries, to this dire reſult;
As if the *Thracian* queen conducted all,
And wrote the *moral* in her children's blood;
Which ſeas might labour to waſh out in vain.
Hear *it*, ye nations! diſtant ages! hear;
And learn, the dread decrees of *Jove* to fear:
His dread decrees the ſtricteſt balance keep;
The father groans, who made a mother weep;
But if no terror for *yourſelves* can move,
Tremble, ye parents, for the child ye love;
For *Your Demetrius*: *Mine* is doom'd to bleed
A guiltleſs victim, for his father's deed.

AN HISTORICAL

EPILOGUE.

By the AUTHOR.

AN EPILOGUE, *thro' cuſtom, is your right,*
But ne'er perhaps was needful *till this night:*
To-night the virtuous falls, the guilty flies,
Guilt's dreadful cloſe our narrow ſcene denies.
In hiſtory's authentic record read
What ample vengeance gluts Demetrius' *ſhade;*
Vengeance ſo great, that when his tale is told,
With pity ſome ev'n Perſeus *may behold.*
Perſeus *ſurviv'd, indeed, and fill'd the throne,*
But ceaſeleſs cares in conqueſt made him groan:
Nor reign'd he long; from Rome *ſwift thunder flew,*
And headlong from his throne the tyrant threw:
Thrown headlong down, by Rome *in triumph led,*
For this *night's deed his perjur'd boſom bled:*
His brother's ghoſt each moment made him ſtart,
And all his father's anguiſh rent his heart.
When, rob'd in black, his children round him hung,
And their rais'd arms in early ſorrow wrung;
The younger ſmil'd, unconſcious of their woe;
At which thy tears, O Rome! *began to flow;*

So

So ſad the ſcene: What then muſt Perſeus *feel,*
To ſee Jove's *race attend the victor's wheel:*
To ſee the ſlaves of his worſt foe encreaſe,
From ſuch a ſource!—An emperor's embrace?
He ſicken'd ſoon to death; and, what is worſe,
He well deſerv'd, *and* felt *the coward's curſe;*
Unpity'd, ſcorn'd, inſulted his laſt hour,
Far, far from home, and in a vaſſal's power:
His pale cheek reſted on his ſhameful chain,
No friend to mourn, no flatterer to feign;
No ſuit retards, no comfort ſooths his doom,
And not one tear bedews a monarch's tomb.
Nor ends it thus—dire vengeance to complete,
His antient empire falling, ſhares his fate:
His throne forgot! His weeping country chain'd!
And nations aſk—Where Alexander *reign'd.*
As public woes a prince's crimes purſue,
So public bleſſings are his virtue's due.
Shout, Britons, *ſhout—auſpicious fortune bleſs!*
*And cry, Long live—*OUR title to ſucceſs?

END of VOL. II.

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